

LORD GEORGE GORDON AND CABALISTIC FREEMASONRY:

BEATING JACOBITE SWORDS INTO JACOBIN PLOUGHSHARES

Published in Secret Conversions to Judaism in Early  
Modern Europe, eds. Martin Mulsow and Richard Popkin.

(Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 2004), 183-231.

Marsha Keith Schuchard, Ph.D.  
1423 Cornell Rd. NE  
Atlanta, Georgia USA 30306  
<keithschuchard@gmail.com>

LORD GEORGE GORDON AND CABALISTIC FREEMASONRY:  
 BEATING JACOBITE SWORDS INTO JACOBIN PLOUGHSHARES

\*\*\*\*\*

The first Christian Prince that expelled the Jews out of his territories, was that heroic King, our Edward the First, who was such a scourge also to the Scots; and it is thought diverse families of these banished Jews fled then to Scotland, where they have propagated since in great numbers; witness the aversion that nation hath above all others to hogs-flesh.

---James Howell (1652)

To make the wrong appear the right,  
 And keep our rulers in;  
 In Walpole's time 'twas Jacobite,  
 In Pitt's, 'tis Jacobin.

---Edward Coxe (1805)

\*\*\*\*\*

My interest in the quixotic figure of Lord George Gordon grew out of a research project on the Cabalistic-Masonic milieu of four equally outré eighteenth-century characters--Emanuel Swedenborg, Dr. Samuel Jacob Falk, Count Cagliostro, and William Blake. In the process of tracing the transformation of Jacobite Freemasonry into Jacobin Freemasonry--in Sweden, Poland, France, and Britain--the strange career of Gordon emerged as a palimpsest of the more extreme factors in that transformation. Moreover, it became clear that his sensational conversion to Judaism was not the irrational act of an eccentric fanatic but the rational conclusion to an ancient Scottish tradition of philo-Semitism, in which radical patriots proudly identified

themselves with the embattled Jews.

Though most historians continue to portray "Rabbi" Gordon as "obviously insane," a more flattering portrait is given by the biographer Percy Colson: "Lord George was the first aristocratic Socialist in England, the first pacifist in the modern sense, and one of the first to make a protest against the extreme brutality of the penal laws."<sup>1</sup> He was also the firebrand demagogue who brought England to the brink of violent revolution, when much of London went up in flames in the Gordon Riots of 1780. Seven years later he was revered by thousands of Jews as a reborn Moses who would lead them back to the Promised Land. It is testimony to the eclecticism and complexity of Freemasonry in the eighteenth century that Gordon found a Masonic niche for his idealistic and antinomian personality.

George Gordon was born in 1751 in the family townhouse in London, the sixth and posthumous child of Cosmo, Third Duke of Gordon. The Gordons were proud--even haughty--about their ancient Scottish lineage, and the family still possessed enormous wealth and property in the North. They also possessed notions of European grandeur, which colored Lord George's grandiose sense of his own destiny. His father was named for Cosimo III de Medici, Duke of Tuscany, who had been a close friend of George's grandfather. The Gordons also boasted of their blood-ties to many Polish aristocrats--all of whom were active in Polish-French versions of Scottish Masonry (which were generically called Écossais rites).<sup>2</sup> As Gordon learned later, several of these Polish families had Jewish blood and were fascinated by Sabbatian forms of Jewish Cabalism.<sup>3</sup> Three years after his father's death, Gordon's mother Catherine set her sights on Stanislaus Poniatowski, King of Poland, who claimed not only Gordon but Stuart and Jewish blood.<sup>4</sup> She dressed her young sons up as cupids and had them shower the visiting King with silver darts, as she reclined seductively on the sofa.<sup>5</sup> Failing to win Stanislaus, she took the children off to Scotland, where they played happily on the vast Gordon estates.

Gordon frequently alluded to his close family and historical relationship to the royal Stuart family, who portrayed themselves as the Solomonic architects of the royalist Temple of Wisdom.<sup>6</sup> However, the Jacobite rebellion of 1745, in which supporters of the Stuart Pretender James "III" rose against the Hanoverian King George II, triggered a traumatic split in the Gordon clans. George Gordon's uncle Lord Lewis

Gordon enthusiastically joined Prince Charles Edward Stuart, the "Young Pretender," and became a dashing commander of the Scottish forces.<sup>7</sup> Despite appeals from Lord Lewis, his brother Cosmo followed the advice of their grandfather (who had fought in the failed 1715 rising) to avoid involvement in politics.<sup>8</sup> In the decade after the Jacobite defeat of 1746, while Lewis languished in exile in France, Cosmo's widow persuaded King George that her husband's passive loyalty deserved royal recognition. Thus, George II agreed to stand as godfather to Cosmo's posthumous son--an act the king's grandson George III would later regret. Though the Gordons were traditionally Catholic, the Duchess now raised her sons as strict Presbyterians. For George Gordon, his parents' break with their Jacobite and Catholic traditions was an intensely serious step that would color his political and religious thinking for years. To justify it, the Protestant government of the "Elector of Hanover" (as he always called George III) must continuously prove its moral superiority--or it did not deserve to replace the legitimate Stuart heirs.

The political split within the Gordon clans was mirrored in a Masonic split as well. Since 1717 Jacobites and Hanoverians had struggled for dominance within Freemasonry, and rival systems of lodges emerged in Britain and abroad. The Gordon name appeared frequently in Masonic annals, on both sides, throughout the century.<sup>9</sup> George's older brother William later married Jean Maxwell, whose great-uncle Robert Maxwell joined the Jacobite rebels, was arrested, sentenced to death, but then reprieved and shipped to India. When the Stuart Prince arrived in Scotland, Robert Maxwell was working on a compilation of the historical records of the Masonic lodge of Holyrood House, of which he was an activist member. Unfortunately, there is a gap in the records from September 1745 to 7 April 1746, so there is no documentation for the alleged initiation of Prince Charles into the Masonic chapter of Knights Templar at Holyrood.<sup>10</sup> Rumors about this ceremony circulated in the high-degree lodges of Écossais Masonry, reaching the far-flung corners of Sweden, Russia, Poland, Germany, France, and Italy.

According to shadowy Scottish traditions, not only the Templars but the Jews expelled from medieval England found refuge in Scotland, where they assimilated into the local population and infused their traditions into the Scottish lifestyle.<sup>11</sup> In the later seventeenth-century, when the Stuart kings protected the Jews, there was an infusion of Jewish

mystical lore into Masonic rituals.<sup>12</sup> The radical pantheist John Toland, who had participated in Rosicrucian-Masonic societies in Scotland in 1689-90, later claimed that a considerable "part of the British inhabitants are the undoubted offspring of the Jews," for a "a great number of 'em [Jews] fled to Scotland, which is the reason so many in that part of the Island, have such a remarkable aversion to pork and black-puddings to this day, not to insist on some other resemblances easily observable."<sup>13</sup> During the 1715 and 1745 Jacobite rebellions, many royalist Jews on the Continent continued to support the Stuart cause.<sup>14</sup>

As exiled Jacobite Masons developed increasingly Cabalistic higher degrees, the Hanoverian government in London counter-attacked. In 1747 Henry Fielding utilized his government-subsidized journal to link the Jacobites with occultist (Templar) Freemasonry, claiming that they enacted secret rituals for political subversion and sexual perversion.<sup>15</sup> In 1748 Fielding argued that the Jacobites were not only Masons but Jews:

...it is the unhappy Fate of both these People, who have been alike deprived of their own divinely constituted Kings, to live under Governments which they hold to be damnable and diabolical, and no Allegiance nor Submission due to them: But, on the contrary, are daily hoping and looking for their Destruction...

.....

...the Jacobites, when they set this surprizing Mark on themselves, had a View to imitate the Jews...I mean in the Humour of Circumcision, which at present so universally prevails upon the Jacobites equally with the Jews. The Original of the Practice was set on Foot, as I am told, soon after the Battle of Culloden, and was performed in memory of that Victory, or as they call it Massacre... From that day the Custom hath been universal; and I am credibly informed there is not a Jacobite now in England who is uncircumcised.<sup>16</sup>

For Prince Charles, who became the "hidden" Grand Master of the Masonic Knights Templar, the Franco-Scottish tradition that linked the "Judaized" Templars with nationalist hostility to the Papacy would prove attractive, as he struggled to remove the

taint of autocratic "Papism" from his campaign in Britain. Despite Hanoverian propaganda that painted the Stuarts as bigoted Catholic tyrants, the Prince was known as a free-thinker, whose manifesto for complete religious toleration in Britain was penned by Voltaire, his great admirer.<sup>17</sup> After the Jacobite defeat at Culloden, Freemasonry in Scotland underwent a dark period, from which few records survive--particularly those of Jacobite sympathizers. In 1756 the despised Edward Wyvil, who had supplied a list of known rebels to the authorities, joined the famous Jacobite lodge of Canongate-Kilwinning and led it towards Hanoverian submission.<sup>18</sup>

In that same year, however, a Scotch-Irish Mason named Laurence Dermott published Ahiman Rezon (London, 1756), which promoted the "Ancient" system of lodges as rooted in the superior Masonry of the Cabalistic Jews and the Scottish kings.<sup>19</sup> In 1764 Dermott went further in stressing the Jewish traditions of "Ancient" Masonry, noting that the coat of arms for the restored Stuart fraternity was designed in 1675 by "Brother" Jacob Judah Leon, Jewish architect of a famous model of the Jerusalem Temple. The "Ancients" insisted on esoteric ceremonies which the "Moderns" rejected, especially the Cabalistic higher degrees of Knights Templar, Rose-Croix, and Royal Arch.<sup>20</sup> Under Dermott's energetic leadership, the "Ancients" seceded from the "Modern" Grand Lodge and soon attracted many recruits from the disaffected artisan classes in London.

The government increased its pressure on the former Jacobite lodges in Scotland, and after the French-Jacobite invasion scare of 1759, the lodge at Holyrood cautiously moved from Jacobitism to Whiggism in the 1760's--a shift that did not imply admiration for King George III. During the same period, the "Ancients" recruited aggressively in the American colonies, where they emerged as the dominant system of Masonry and significant contributors to the independence movement. Among the "Ancient" recruits were many Jews, who shared the resentment against English encroachments on American rights. As the Jewish-American Freemason Dr. Isaac Wise affirmed in The Israelite (1855), "Masonry is a Jewish institution whose history, degrees, charges, passwords, and explanations are Jewish from beginning to end, with the exception of only one by degree and a few words in the obligation."<sup>21</sup> Moreover, he adds, Jews in the American colonies in the mid-eighteenth century were most attracted to the Ancient or "Scottish Rite," in which they became not only Knights of the Temple but Scottish Masters.

Meanwhile, against a background of polarization and confusion in Scotland, Lord George's widowed mother was determined that her family would emerge from the Jacobite defeat in sound financial shape. She married a 21 year-old American officer, raised a regiment of Gordon Highlanders for George II's service, and sent her sons off to Eton to become properly Anglicized (a move that failed signally with her youngest son). George, when barely adolescent, was given a naval commission and shipped out to America. Despite his officer status, he identified and sympathized with the common sailors, whose appalling conditions he protested to his superiors. Gaining the lifelong epithet of "the sailor's friend," he also gained the lifelong resentment of the officer class.

During a six-month stay in Jamaica, Gordon became incensed at the brutal treatment of the slaves. "What sort of world is it," he declaimed, "that allowed such inequality and such injustice, that viewed without concern the sugar planters growing rich at the expense of the whipped, hungry, bleeding bodies of their slaves?"<sup>22</sup> Protesting to the governor and writing outraged letters to Parliament, Gordon vowed to devote himself to ending the slave trade. When his ship spent long periods in American ports, Gordon saw in the sturdy and independent colonists a new breed of men and a new type of society. As Dr. Robert Watson (his later secretary and biographer) remembered, Gordon observed that "the sacred flame of Freedom--with a large F--aided by reason was making rapid progress every day."<sup>23</sup> When the Americans began agitating against British rule, Gordon resigned his naval commission in 1773, "partly from a resolution never to imbrue his hands in the blood of men struggling for freedom."

Returning to Scotland, he determined to pursue a Rousseauian ideal of the simple life by spending long periods in the remote Hebrides. Like Diderot, Helvetius, and the French philosophes after the 1745 rebellion, Gordon believed that the Highlanders preserved the instinctive virtues of man in a natural, simple society.<sup>24</sup> Wearing Highland dress, speaking Gaelic, playing the bagpipes, and dancing reels, Gordon emerged as a local Celtic hero.<sup>25</sup> However, as news of the increasing grievances of the Americans reached the North, Gordon decided to enter Parliament as an advocate for the "Sons of Liberty." Burning with reformist zeal, he sensed a prophetic significance to his political activities from his earliest days in

Westminster.

Years later, a disciple of Richard Brothers (self-proclaimed "Prince of the Hebrews" and advocate of "illuminist" Freemasonry) recalled that in 1774 he was visited by Gordon.<sup>26</sup> The new M.P. "actually read over the prophecies of Martha Fry and with great attention," which can be vouched for "by Dr. Hugh Mayson and Gordon's friends in London." Fry quoted scraps from the Hebrew prophets who proved that a great liberator would come "from the North" to save the people of Israel, and Gordon especially identified with one prophecy, which he continued to proclaim over the next decades:

Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and they shall no more say, the Lord liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but the Lord liveth, which brought up, and        which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the North Country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land.<sup>27</sup>

Gordon soon became famous as "the Third Party" in Parliament. Acting as a "minority of one," he challenged Whigs and Tories in constant debate. Gordon's colorful personality and daring speeches made him popular with the same artisans and shopkeepers who earlier took to the streets in support of John Wilkes, who opposed the government's military and imperial policies. Initially, Gordon was encouraged by his intimate friends Charles James Fox and Edmund Burke, though he later claimed to suspect even then that "they were no real friends to the people."<sup>28</sup> Like Fox, Burke, and his own brothers, Gordon was almost certainly a Freemason.<sup>29</sup> It was probably members of Burke's lodge, "Jerusalem, #4," who in 1769 initiated Wilkes, while he was confined in King's Bench Prison.<sup>30</sup>

In June 1776 Gordon accompanied William Hickey, a member of Wilkes's lodge, and several partisans of the American revolution on a rollicking visit to Paris, where they cheered the rebels with like-minded Frenchmen. When the American Declaration of Independence was issued in July, sympathetic Masons in Paris formed the lodge of "Neuf Soeurs," in an act of revolutionary solidarity with their American brothers.<sup>31</sup> After his return from France, Gordon became the Americans' most vociferous champion in Parliament. Claiming to represent the "party of the people," he



soon identified the "voice of the people" with the "voice of God." To the disaffected citizens of London, who sullenly opposed the war against the colonists, Gordon's harangues were tonic. As Hibbert observes, "Sometimes their grotesque sarcasm, their unashamed rudeness or their splendid splenetic fury, seemed to raise them to a sort of grandeur."<sup>32</sup>

In summer 1778 his Isaiah-like denunciations found a welcoming audience among the new Protestant Associations formed to protest the passing of the Savile Act, which relieved Catholics of some of the disabilities imposed by William III in 1700. Though many of the Protestant protesters were motivated purely by anti-Catholic bigotry, Gordon viewed the Act as a surreptitious trick to recruit poverty-stricken Catholic Highlanders into regiments who would fight the American revolutionaries. As his biographer Watson explained, in 1778 the war against the colonists was going badly, because the American "Sons of Liberty were an overmatch" for George III's "mercenary soldiers":

...[thus] the government, not from liberality of sentiment or a tolerating spirit...proposed to the leaders of the Catholics to repeal the statutes enacted against them; provided they would contribute to support the American War by entering into the fleets or armies... The Army and Navy found new supplies, and the Cabinet new vigour for prosecuting an unhappy civil war.<sup>33</sup>

In his protests, Gordon accurately pointed out that most Catholics were not in favor of the bill, fearing it would cause more problems than benefits.

The Savile Act also made clear that George III was still terrified of a Jacobite rebellion, especially after rumors circulated in 1775 that the "Young Pretender," now calling himself Charles III, was approached by Boston patriots who wanted him to serve as the figurehead of a provisional American government (a thrust pour épater les Anglais).<sup>34</sup> In 1778 there were more reports that the Stuart claimant, who greatly admired the American rebels, was preparing to sail to the new country. With France now fighting for the revolutionaries, the vision of a Jacobite descent on Scotland and French invasion of southern England loomed with paranoid déjà vu. While echoing the popular cries of "No Popery!" Gordon argued cogently that the only "relief" for the Catholics was the privilege of being dragooned

into George III's troops bound for America. Moreover, they must renounce their long-cherished traditions of loyalty to the Stuarts, as demanded by the new oath:

I A.B. do sincerely promise and swear, that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to his Majesty King George the Third, and him will defend, to the utmost of my power, against all conspiracies and attempts whatever that shall be made against his person, crown, or dignity; and I will do my utmost endeavour to disclose and make known to his Majesty, his heirs, and successors, all treasons and traitorous conspiracies which may be formed against him or them...hereby utterly renouncing and abjuring any obedience or allegiance unto the person taking upon himself the stile and title of Prince of Wales, in the lifetime of his father, and who, since his death, is said to have assumed the stile and title of King of Great Britain, by the name of Charles the Third...<sup>35</sup>

Encouraged by Gordon's harangues in Parliament, the Protestant Association in Edinburgh presented petitions for redress and, when they were ignored, provoked riots all over Scotland in early 1779. An alarmed government then agreed that Catholic Relief would not be extended north of the Tweed. One politically-astute observer of these developments was the Highland-born Robert Watson, who had recently returned to his native country.<sup>36</sup> Watson had served in the revolutionary army in America, where he rose to the rank of Colonel and became intimate with General George Washington. Watson was probably aware that Washington played a leading role in "Ancient" Freemasonry and that he used Masonic initiations as a way of ensuring loyalty and bolstering morale among his troops.<sup>37</sup> Made lame by a war wound, Watson returned to Edinburgh, where he joined the circle of radical Whig antiquarians led by the eccentric David Stewart Erskine, eleventh Earl of Buchan, who was a cousin of Gordon and leader of local "Ancient" lodges.<sup>38</sup>

Buchan collected the papers of Fletcher of Saltoun, a Scottish nationalist and radical republican, who had organized resistance to James II and William III in the late seventeenth century. Under Buchan's tutelage, Watson became fascinated by Fletcher's ideals and methods, which he viewed in quasi-Masonic terms. In Watson's biography of Fletcher, written in 1798 when he participated in a secret political society affiliated with the United Irishmen, he hinted at the similarities between the

# Scottish Covenanters, Protestant Associations, and United Brotherhoods:

...the people took an oath, called the solemn league and covenant, not unlike the oath of the united irishmen, by which they bound themselves to support one another, and persevere until they obtained a redress of grievances.\*

\* [Note].It is worth remarking, that the Scots, in the neighborhood of Glasgow, were the first people who took a secret oath to counteract the encroachments of despotism; and so lasting has been the impression, that their descendants in Ireland and America have copied their example. This mode of opposing tyranny, after making the tour of America and Europe, seems to be revived with increased enthusiasm, in the very country which gave it birth.<sup>39</sup>

Watson cautiously did not refer to Freemasonry, which was under government surveillance in 1798, but he was undoubtedly aware that Masons had been involved in the seventeenth-century Covenanting movement, which was influenced by the fraternity's methods of secret communication, bonding, and organization.<sup>40</sup>

In 1779 Watson also visited France, where he evidently contacted his old friend Benjamin Franklin, Master of the "Neuf Soeurs" lodge, who was organizing French support for the Americans.<sup>41</sup> According to his own claim, Watson subsequently became secretary to Gordon. As his later career revealed, Watson was a hard-core revolutionary, who excelled in radical propaganda and clandestine organizing.<sup>42</sup> Though he called himself "secretary" to Gordon, it is clear that he attempted to manipulate his volatile employer to serve his political agenda. As a free-thinking deist, Watson did not share Gordon's ardent religiosity, and he was unaware of the impact that his advocacy of the Covenanting movement would have on his protégé.

As Williamson reveals, since 1581 Scottish Protestants viewed their nation as contracted to the God of Israel, for their anti-Papist "Covenant" replicated Moses's engagement on Mount Sinai, and by 1638 the Covenanters vowed to rebuild the Jerusalem Temple in the North: "Judaized identities, Judaized politics, and enduring fascination with contemporary Jewry all deeply informed Scottish political culture in the seventeenth century."<sup>43</sup> Stevenson stresses the "awe-inspiring belief" that

"the Scots were the successors to the Jews as a chosen people of God," which motivated them to fight against all odds to carry out the earthly mission of the God of Israel.<sup>44</sup> Opponents of the Covenanters often charged that they were "ethnically related" to the Jews, who allegedly intermarried after their escape to Scotland in medieval times.<sup>45</sup>

On 12 November 1779 the Protestant Association in England was so emboldened by the Scots' successful rejection of the Savile Act that they asked Gordon to serve as their president. In his acceptance letter, Gordon made clear that he was not interested in religious persecution:

I trust that coolness and temper in the proceedings of the Association will soon demonstrate to the Roman Catholics that we are far from being possessed of a persecuting disposition; and I hope the attention of Parliament to the petitions of Englishmen will be so very respected and prudent, so as not to raise the apprehensions of the lower classes of people. Had the addresses of the provincial Synods in Scotland been duly respected, and attended to, the houses and chapels of the Scotch Papists would never have suffered by the resentment of an enraged populace.-- The Roman Catholics must know as well as we do, that Popery when encouraged by the Government has always been dangerous to the liberties of the people.<sup>46</sup>

However, Gordon also made clear in this letter that his real concern was the military recruitment, for it alarmed him exceedingly "to see with what eagerness and joy the Papists were willing to contribute their mite in support of an unhappy civil war, against the Protectorate in America."<sup>47</sup>

Elated with his new power, Gordon delivered a strangely threatening harangue in the House of Commons on 25 November:

Mr. Speaker: I should not have troubled the House were it not for the absurdities with which the speech from the Throne is replete. It is totally destitute of common sense. His Majesty tells us that in consequence of our addresses he has ordered certain papers, relative to Ireland, to be laid before us. Why was not that order made in consequence of the addresses from Ireland? Was the Irish Parliament unworthy of his majesty's notice? The truth is His Majesty's ministers are no less odious in Ireland than they

are in England. In Scotland the people are ready to break with the Ministry as in Ireland...I do not deliver my own sentiments only; government will find 120,000 men at my back who will avow and support them!...

The coast of Scotland, Sir, is left naked and defenceless; the people of Dumfriesshire had therefore petitioned for arms to defend themselves. That country is in such a position that Paul Jones might with utmost facility have destroyed Glasgow...and Edinburgh in one expedition...Could it have occurred to any one that the Administration would have denied so reasonable a requisition?...And yet the Secretary of the Elector of Hanover has had that presumption! The Royal Family of Stuart have been banished from their kingdom for not attending to the voice of the People, and an Elector of Hanover is not afraid to disregard it!...The Scots...are convinced in their own mind that the King is a Papist.<sup>48</sup>

Gordon probably knew that the privateer John Paul Jones had been initiated into Freemasonry in Scotland in 1770, was currently affiliated with the radical lodge "Neuf Soeurs" in Paris, and collaborated with its Master Ben Franklin.<sup>49</sup>

Despite--or possibly because of--the threatening tone of this speech, the King granted Gordon a personal interview on 29 January 1780. According to Gordon, he delivered into the King's "own hand the English appeal against the Popery Bill drawn up by...the Protestant Association."<sup>50</sup> Complaining that Lord North had refused to deliver it, Gordon asked if he might report to the Association that the King had received the appeal "very graciously." However, Horace Walpole reported that Gordon also pulled out an Irish pamphlet and read it for an hour, to the distress of the cornered King.<sup>51</sup> The author Francis Dobbs was an ardent Irish nationalist, who later boasted that he "was the first man in Ireland, who exerted himself openly, and called loudly for the liberties of this country."<sup>52</sup> In the pamphlet, Dobbs boldly attacked Lord North and his Ministry for violating Constitutional law in his domineering policies over Ireland:

If, whilst poor, you claim absolute power over us, by what chain of reasoning are we to suppose you will relinquish it, should we become rich? It makes no difference that this power is vested in the legislature of Great Britain, and not in a single hand. Absolute power in one or in many is the same. Its effect is equally destructive to the

happiness of a state or individual.<sup>53</sup>

Following Gordon's lead in demanding arms for Scottish "self-defense," Dobbs called for armed Protestant militias in Ireland on the basis of the Crown's increasing encroachments on Irish rights:

The Law and Constitution gives a positive right to every Protestant in Ireland to carry arms...Should it ever happen that a King of great Britain and Ireland becomes jealous of his People, it will be high Time for the People to be jealous of him; and to take care that they have a Power superior to any he can command.<sup>54</sup>

Dobbs's pamphlet expressed cogently the growing assault by Celtic radicals and nationalists on the illegitimacy of the autocratic government of the "Elector of Hanover."

The struggle of the Americans, bolstered by the "Ancient" and Scottish-rite Masonic lodges, gave a new twist to formerly Jacobite disaffection. As Lenman observes, the demise of effective Jacobite opposition in the 1760's led the Welsh nationalists to look to the American rebels for inspiration-- "The future lay with the radicals in America."<sup>55</sup> According to Jenkins, the formerly Jacobite Masonic lodges in Wales "helped to carry the old alliance between Jacobitism and radicalism into the last quarter of the century."<sup>56</sup> What was true for Wales was even more true among the supporters of Dobbs in Ireland and Gordon in Scotland, for the American Revolution was essentially "Celtic radicalism made flesh." Curiously, Dobbs--like Gordon--would later become a philo-Semitic Zionist and an initiate of Cabalistic Freemasonry.<sup>57</sup>

Gordon's reading of Dobbs's pamphlet convinced the King that "the mad Scotchman" might prove dangerous. Thus, he instructed Lord North to attempt to bribe him with money and a naval command as rewards for resigning from the Protestant Association.<sup>58</sup> Gordon indignantly refused, much to the delight of his admirers who resented the greed and venality of most members of Parliament (on both sides). It was perhaps the King or Edmund Burke who sent Lord Petre to visit Gordon in spring 1780. Petre was not only a leader of the Catholics and an advocate of toleration, but he had recently served as Grand Master of "Modern" or Hanoverian Freemasonry (1772-77).<sup>59</sup> He was still a Masonic power and he expected to have some influence with

Gordon, who was an old family friend. Petre flattered Gordon and warned him that the Protestant Association was "a mean set of people," which only goaded Gordon's proud egalitarianism. When Petre asked him to postpone presenting the petition for repeal, Gordon answered with his peculiar mixture of Jacobite threat and Protestant defiance:

I replied that if the Popery Bill stood as it was, and any one Papist should use half the honest pains to restore the ancient and hereditary royal family of Stuart to the throne that I took to promote the glory of the God of Israel, and of the people, the present illustrious Sovereign, and all the rest of the House of Hanover might find themselves in exile in a fifth of the time his lordship required... If I was a Papist, or could tolerate Popery, I would not take any oath of allegiance to the House of Hanover (being Protestants) as long as there was an hereditary Popish Prince, of the antient and royal family of Stuart (my own near, dear, and lawful relations) to be found on the face of the earth, and in just and necessary banishment from the throne of these kingdoms, merely for his idolatry in being reconciled to Popery.<sup>60</sup>

As Gordon observed, Lord Petre seemed puzzled by this outburst, with its peculiar combination of claims for Stuart legitimacy, Protestant superiority, and Hebrew religiosity. Gordon later remarked that he could easily have refuted Petre, "from the Word of God and those arguments deducible from the commandments binding upon the Jews and Christians."<sup>61</sup> This linking of Jewish law with the Protestant cause and the "Sons of Liberty" provides an early clue to Gordon's subsequent conversion to Judaism.

When Gordon told Edmund Burke about his rejection of Petre's proposals, Burke broke off their once intimate friendship. He would later become an inveterate enemy of Gordon.<sup>62</sup> While the government repeated their offers of bribes and positions to Gordon and members of his family, he continued to seek redress personally from the King, frequently reminding George III that his own grandfather had been the petitioner's godfather. In a fourth interview on 19 May 1780, Gordon revealed "the dark secret" to the King that the English Popery Bill was passed "for the diabolical purpose of arming the Papists against the Protestant Colonies in America,--and not from any mild, benevolent, enlightened views of the legislature," which

deliberately hid "the real design from the deluded people of England."<sup>63</sup> He recounted secret conversations between the war-making Ministers and the Catholic Bishop Hay, who himself asserted that "the Roman Catholics had enlisted in great numbers into the last regiments raised in Scotland, to go out to the war against the American colonists."<sup>64</sup>

As the King evaded his probing questions--claiming he knew of no secret correspondence--Gordon again threatened him with a Protestant re-run of the Jacobite rebellions. "I told him that the encouragement given to Popery by King James the Second, was the chief reason for our antient and hereditary royal family of the House of Stuart being forced and banished from the Throne of these kingdoms."<sup>65</sup> You Hanoverians were brought over only "to defend and promote the Protestant interest"; therefore, you should not be countenancing "the same dangerous system" as the exiled Stuarts. "For his Majesty's honour and security in the present distracted state of these kingdoms and colonies," he should clear away "all the suspicions of Popery from his government." Oddly, Gordon seemed to cling to the hope that his parents' desertion of the Jacobite cause would be justified by the "right action" of the Hanoverian protectors of British Protestantism. However, he had already quarreled with his brothers for their toadying before the war-making Ministry. The stubbornness of George III--and his personal determination to crush the rebellion in America--eventually led to Gordon's disgust with all kings. If Britain could not have its legitimate Stuart heir and his Protestant replacement proved to be absolutist and "Papist," then Britain should have no king.

In the meantime, the Protestant Association had amassed over 120,000 signatures to their petition for repeal of the Catholic Bill. Encouraged by the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of the City of London, who despised the Ministry, Gordon advertised in the papers for tens of thousands of sympathizers to gather at St. George's Field in Lambeth to prepare for a mass march to Parliament. The Association "would consider the most prudent and respectful manner" of presenting their petition, would organize the people into four divisions "for the sake of good order and regularity," and would request the attendance of City magistrates so "that their presence may overawe and control any riotous or evil-minded persons who may wish to disturb the legal and peaceable deportment of His Majesty's Protestant subjects."<sup>66</sup> These cautionary words, published in the Public Advertiser, would eventually help save Gordon from execution.



On 2 June 1780, a great sea of people--wearing blue cockades on their hats--marched in orderly fashion across the Thames bridges towards the seat of government. Led by Gordon, dressed defiantly in Scottish plaid, and by Scottish drummers and bagpipers, the crowd seemed to embody Gordon's threatened re-run of the Jacobite rebellions--this time in purely Protestant form. When the House refused to consider the petition, Gordon informed the crowds, whose ranks were being swelled by ruffians, criminals, and drunks. On the morning of 6 June, an inflammatory handbill entitled "England in Blood" was circulated, which urged the populace to unite "as One Man" to defend their religious and civil liberties.<sup>67</sup> As Erdman argues, the young artist William Blake united "as One Man" with the crowd that burned Newgate Prison and later paid tribute to the Gordon rioters in his sketch, "Albion rose from where he laboured at the Mill with Slaves."<sup>68</sup>

By 7 June, reports reached the king that agents provocateurs from France and America were directing the mobs and that the next targets were the National Bank, Stock Exchange, and Arsenal at Woolwich. Thus, thousands of troops were ordered into the city and a virtual state of martial law was imposed. According to Thomas Holcroft, an officer in the service of the American Congress revealed the revolutionary design of the riots:

...the Congress had much difficulty to persuade the Americans to continue the war another year, and that they were at last only prevailed upon, in consequence of being assured that the Cities of London and Westminster would be burnt and destroyed this summer...Government is of the opinion that something besides Religion has been the occasion of the Disturbances.<sup>69</sup>

Adding to the government's alarm was the fact that most of the troops fraternized with the protestors and shared their abhorrence of "Papist" moves against the American rebels. Infuriated, George III ordered severe measures and at least some of the troops obeyed orders to fire into the mobs, shooting over 700 and hanging a few more from lampposts.

On 9 June 1780 Gordon was arrested and, guarded by the largest military force ever accorded a state prisoner, he was taken to the Tower. Huge crowds cheered their hero in route.

Horace Walpole reported that "it was much apprehended that there would be a rising in Scotland," especially as a handbill circulated charging that George III was a Roman Catholic and should therefore lose his head: "Down with them that is! Lord George Gordon for ever. Tho' he is in the Tower he will make them Rue for a Army of Scottish is coming 100,000 men in Arms, for George will lose his Crown."<sup>70</sup> Samuel Johnson, still a Jacobite at heart, sympathized with Gordon and recognized the government's fears of a Jacobite-style rebellion. As Johnson wrote Mrs. Thrale, "We frighten one another with 70,000 Scots to come hither with the Dukes of Gordon and Argyll, and eat us, and hang us or drown us."<sup>71</sup>

Provocatively, Gordon's secretary Dr. Watson wished Gordon had gone even further into outright treason, for he regarded the "terrible June 7 as a disappointingly abortive Day of Judgment."<sup>72</sup> In fact, it is possible that Watson was indeed an agent of the American revolutionaries who vowed to send London up in flames. Given his later career as a clandestine organizer of armed revolutionary action and naval mutinies, it seems likely that Watson deliberately exploited Gordon's popularity to plan a much more serious assault on the government than Gordon himself envisioned. As Watson remembered,

For many days a dreadful vengeance threatened the guilty city...and a certain Great Personage [George III] is said to have prepared for quitting England. Lord George was carried in triumph by the multitude, and nothing presented itself to the astounded spectator but devouring flames. It is certain that he [Gordon], who afterwards dragged a painful existence, in a loathesome jail, might have then overturned the government, and founded a consitution agree-able to the wills and true interest of the people-- 100,000 men were ready to execute his orders, and ministers trembled for their personal safety. The unprincipled lawless banditti who commenced the riots, were miscreants set on foot by French agents, for at that time, France was governed by a perfidious king. Lord George was an enemy to plunder and devastation, he was shocked with the violence of their proceedings; and those excesses which government afterwards laid to his charge, undoubtedly saved them from destruction; for the timorous and those unaccustomed to revolutionary movements withdrew, whilst administration had time to recover from their panic, and to rally their desponding forces.<sup>73</sup>

In fact, Gordon was so distressed at the violence--especially the attacks on Irish workingmen--that he sought an audience with the King to offer his help in calming the rioters. But George III refused, citing his doubts about Gordon's "loyalty."

Interestingly, the government suspected that American agents then in London--such as William Bailston, who helped organize the Boston Tea Party--had cooperated with Benjamin Franklin in Paris to manipulate the rioters. And, in fact, Bailston would frequently visit Gordon in the Tower.<sup>74</sup> Watson himself probably knew of the lead role that the St. Andrews Lodge, an outgrowth of Jacobite Masonry, played in the Tea Party, and that Franklin utilized Masonic networks to further his diplomatic agenda.<sup>75</sup> Though some of the rioters had targeted the house of Lord Petre, still a leader of "Modern" Masonry, and Freemasons Hall itself, the Masons in general were suspected of complicity in the disorders. Certainly, many of the "Ancients" were involved--just as they had been in the anti-war Wilkes Riots of 1774.<sup>76</sup> The mob violence of 1780 intensified the political polarization within Freemasonry; over the next two decades, supporters of the government labored to control the "Moderns" and suppress the "Ancients." Frome Wilkinson claimed that this repressive policy put a severe check on "these benevolent combinations": "Records were destroyed, and the most vigilant secrecy obtained."<sup>77</sup>

While Gordon was imprisoned in the Tower for eight months, he expanded his campaign against "Papist" autocracy to foreign rulers. Probably aware that a disaffected Russian nobleman had participated in the London riots, Gordon wrote on 29 August 1780 to Baron Grimm, agent of Catherine the Great, to lambaste the Empress (head of the Greek Orthodox Church) for committing the "abomination" of attending a Latin mass.<sup>78</sup> The Empress responded by exiling the nobleman to Siberia, for she considered him a violent revolutionary in contact with radical Masonic groups.<sup>79</sup> Watson would later proclaim that the Empress "little knew that a grand fraternal union is already formed, which will eventually hurl her from her throne, and emancipate the world from bondage."<sup>80</sup>

From the Tower, Gordon continued to issue his inverted "Jacobite" threats to the British royal family. On 8 September he published a letter in the General Evening Post, revealing that he had urged the Hanoverian Prince of Wales and Lord

Southampton to support the Protestant Association. Southampton had treated Gordon with great civilities in Paris and London; moreover, they both shared Stuart blood:

We NOBLEMEN, whose ancient families have been so closely related, allied, and attached to the Royal House of Stuart in former times of dangerous politicks, have the discerning eyes of the true Protestant people throughout Europe, and America, most steadily fixed upon US at this present moment: Therefore, OUR advice and conduct (as faithful friends to the House of Hanover, being Protestants) ought to be exemplarily decided in support of Reformation and Revolution principles.

As the trial approached, Gordon was lucky to get the counsel of Thomas Erskine, a young lawyer who was not only his cousin but a member of a distinguished Masonic family.<sup>81</sup> Thomas's brother Henry Erskine was serving as Master of the Lodge Canongate-Kilwinning at Edinburgh in 1780. His other brother David, Earl of Buchan, was Watson's mentor; he would serve as Scottish Grand Master ("Ancients") in 1782-84.

In Thomas Erskine's brilliant defense of Gordon, he did not hesitate to use the inverted Jacobite ploy, as he reminded the Court that George III owed his crown to the "wise" acts that restricted Catholic rights.<sup>82</sup> By implication, the Catholic Relief Bill denied George III his legitimacy. Huge crowds waited outside the courtroom, waiting for the verdict. As Watson boasted, "The politics of both hemispheres depended on his acquittal."<sup>83</sup> When the jury brought in the verdict of "Not Guilty," the exhausted Erskine fainted; the crowds carried Gordon in triumph and celebrations erupted all over Britain. The government, though disappointed, considered Gordon a broken man, just as "that Devil Wilkes" had become "an exhausted volcano" after the Wilkes Riots. Moreover, the subdued Gordon seemed ready to withdraw from public life and to devote himself to his voluminous international correspondence and to religious study.

Gordon now abandoned his bold plaid trousers and dressed in Puritanical black, while he invited groups of Quakers to hold meetings in his house. Like Gordon, many Quakers had moved into political radicalism from their earlier involvement in Jacobite and Masonic affairs.<sup>84</sup> However, though Gordon admired the Quakers' simple lifestyle and opposition to the slave trade, he could not accept their passivity in the face of arbitrary power.

Gordon seemed to need stronger religious meat--and a religion that was not contrary to his radical political opinions. Though he agreed to run for Parliament in summer 1781--and had 4,000 voters ready to work for him--Gordon withdrew from the race. From this point on, Gordon's life became so shrouded in mystery that it still baffles scholars.

Percy Colson and Cecil Roth, his most thorough biographers, claim that after his acquittal Gordon became involved with Dr. Samuel Jacob Falk, a Sabbatian Cabalist and radical Freemason, who influenced his conversion to Judaism.<sup>85</sup> As we shall see, Gordon's increasing interest in Judaism was already evident when he was in the Tower, but his daring decision to convert was probably stimulated by the charismatic Dr. Falk. In order to comprehend the appeal of the Jewish magician to a Scottish radical like Gordon, it will be necessary to briefly trace Falk's strange career.

A native of Poland, Falk moved to London circa 1740, where he acted as a Baal Shem, master of the Cabalistic names of God, and expert in the transmutation of metals.<sup>86</sup> Falk was associated with an extremely secretively French-Jacobite lodges in London, where he infused Cabalistic theosophy into their rituals. As a secret disciple of Sabbatai Zevi, the seventeenth-century "false messiah," Falk was willing to pose as a Christian sympathizer in order to recruit Christian occultists to his instruction. I have described elsewhere Falk's relationship with Emanuel Swedenborg, Theodore von Neuhof, Simon van Geldern, and various Freemasons who would later move in Blake's circle.<sup>87</sup>

Supported by wealthy Jewish banking families--the Boases in Holland and the Goldsmids in England, who were also Masons--Falk sought political as well as magical influence in the affairs of Europe.<sup>88</sup> He maintained contact with occultist Masons in Poland, who included families related to Gordon (especially the Czartoriskys and Lubomirskis).<sup>89</sup> In 1773 Prince Adam Czartorisky, leader of Polish Masonry, sought Falk's assistance in his campaign to reclaim the Polish throne from Stanislaus Poniatowski, who was now dominated by the Russian Empress.<sup>90</sup> Czartorisky was intrigued by the role that Cabalism and Masonry could play in Judaeo-Christian collaboration, which was crucial to the Polish nationalist struggle. It is unknown whether Czartorisky also called on Gordon, who was kinned to him and always interested in Polish affairs. After his London mission to Falk, Czartorisky visited the Écossais lodge of the Duke of

Chartres in Paris.<sup>91</sup>

It was probably Czartorisky who informed Chartres, Grand Master of the Grand Orient system of Freemasonry, about Falk's magical and political powers. In late 1776 or early 1777, Chartres travelled to London to solicit Falk's support for his political agenda.<sup>92</sup> The Baal Shem consecrated a talismanic ring of lapis lazuli, whose Cabalistic inscription guaranteed that the Duke would mount the French throne. In 1777 Falk also instructed a Sicilian adventurer, Joseph Balsamo, who came to London to learn the secret rituals of the "Egyptian Rite," an amalgam of Swedenborgian theosophy and Cabalistic magic.<sup>93</sup> Balsamo was allegedly a Marrano, a crypto-Jew, who was attracted to Falk's antinomian Sabbatianism. Balsamo drew on Falk's contacts in the schismatic "Antiquity" lodge, established by the Scottish Mason William Preston, a former Jacobite.<sup>94</sup> When Falk visited the lodge, he listed himself as a member of the lodge "Observance of Heredom, Scotland."

One member of the lodge, General Charles Rainsford, later explained that the Mount of Heredom featured in the Écossais degrees, was not an actual mountain in Scotland but a Cabalistic symbol for the Mons Domini or Malchuth:

The word "Heridon" is famous in several degrees of Masonry, that is to say in some invented degrees... Apparently, the enlightened brethren who have judged it proper to make the law, that Jews should be admitted to the Society have received the word with the secrets (mystères) which have been entrusted to them.<sup>95</sup>

Rainsford would later be considered an expert on the contributions made by Swedenborg and Falk to Cabalistic Freemasonry.<sup>96</sup>

In 1777 Balsamo assumed the name "Count Cagliostro" and the role of "Emissary of the Grand Cophta," whose identity as Falk would be revealed only to elite adepts. He left London and carried the "Egyptian Rite" to Écossais lodges in Holland, Germany, Russia, and Poland. In Russia, the Empress Catherine became alarmed at Cagliostro's Masonic intrigues and expelled him in March 1780. In response to Baron Grimm's report on Cagliostro's subsequent Cabalistic exploits, Catherine wrote a revealing letter on 9 July 1781:

M. Cagliostro...est arrivé dans un moment tres favorable pour lui, dans un moment ou plusieurs loges de francs-maçons, engouées des principes de Swedenborg, voulaient a toute force voir des esprits; ils ont donc couru a Cagliostro, qui se disait en possession de tous les secrets du docteur Falk.<sup>97</sup>

As part of her campaign to crush "illuminist" Freemasonry, she later lampooned Falk and Cagliostro in the character of "Kalifalkerston" in her satirical comedy The Deceiver (1786).<sup>98</sup> Cagliostro was initially more successful with her puppet in Poland, King Stanislaus Poniatowski, who viewed his Cabalistic demonstrations, but the Empress soon brought Poniatowski to heel as she paid agents to infiltrate Polish Masonry.<sup>99</sup> The Czartorisky family, earlier seekers of Falk's magical powers, continued to lead the nationalist Polish Masons in their struggle for independence from Russian domination.

After contacting members of the politically radical "Illuminati" in Germany and Austria, Cagliostro settled in Strasbourg, where he was patronized by Cardinal Rohan and many wealthy Masons. In November 1780 Cagliostro boasted to Rodolphe Saltzmann of his previous Masonic connection in London with Swedenborg and Falk. As Saltzmann reported to a fellow Mason:

Il [Cagliostro] dit beaucoup de bien de Swedenborg et le plaint d'avoir été persecuté. En vain les Suèdois veulent à present quasi resusciter sa cendre, ils ne décourvriront rien. Le plus grand homme en Europe, c'est la célèbre Falke à Londres. C'est dans cette capitale qu'il y à 5 ou 6 maçons qui ont des connaissances, mais la clef leur manque. Il me dit encore qu'en operant il faut des cercles des mots-quatre circles--et des hieroglyphes. Il m'a paru pencher vers le Judaïsme; ce n'est cependant qu'une hypothèse que je ne donne pas pour vraie.<sup>100</sup>

Saltzmann also revealed that Cagliostro planned to journey to Paris to initiate the Duke of Chartres into the Egyptian Rite.

In late 1781, Savalette de Langes--royal treasurer in Paris and head of the Philalèthes lodge of occult research--described Dr. Falk to his Masonic agent:

Dr. Falc, in England. This Dr. Falc is known to many Germans. From every point of view he is a most extraordinary

man. Some believe him to be the chief of all the Jews, and attribute all that is marvelous and strange in his conduct and in his life to schemes which are entirely political... He is practically inaccessible. In all the sects of Adepts in the Occult Sciences, he passes as a man of higher attainments. He is at present in England.<sup>101</sup>

The Philaléthes expected to learn more about Falk from General Charles Rainsford, who collaborated with him in Masonic affairs.

At this time, Falk was working in an intensely secretive effort to develop a Jewish-Christian Masonic order, which became known as the "Asiatic Brethren."<sup>102</sup> Drawing on the antinomian rationale of the Sabbatians, Falk and his Jewish disciples pretended a sympathy for Christianity while carrying out an essentially Zionist political agenda.<sup>103</sup> As Scholem observes, the radical Sabbatians called for a reversal of religious and political norms that led some daring adepts into revolutionary action.<sup>104</sup> While trying to maintain a difficult balance between liberal Christianity and Cabalistic Judaism, the "Asiatic Brethren" increasingly occupied a "no man's land" between two extreme tendencies of rationalism and mysticism.<sup>105</sup>

Given this context of clandestine Masonic and political intrigue in 1778-82, it becomes possible to place Gordon in situations where he may have met Falk. First of all, during the petition drive for the Protestant Association, Gordon spent much time in Whitechapel, center of London's Jewish community. James Fisher, the Secretary of the Protestant Association who invited Gordon to serve as president, lived in Whitechapel, in close proximity to Falk's house in Wellclose Square. Gordon often attended meetings at Fisher's house, and many of the signatures were collected in the area.<sup>106</sup> At least one Jew, Samuel Solomons, joined the Gordon protesters, and he would later display a dignified courage before his execution.<sup>107</sup>

As a sign of his growing wealth and prestige, Falk had built a tabernacle in the center of Wellclose Square and maintained a synagogue in his mansion. By 1780 he was an internationally famous figure, whose long white robes, elaborate turban, and flowing white beard were almost a tourist attraction. Falk's portrait reveals his charismatic appearance and his Masonic role, as he holds a Masonic compass over a Cabalistic amulet.<sup>108</sup> Archenholz, a German Mason who visited London in 1780-81, described Falk as "a noble and interesting



figure," who was an able chemist; he lived soberly and gave generously to the poor.<sup>109</sup> It was an image that would have appealed to Gordon.

While in the Tower, Gordon demonstrated his increasing interest in Jewish traditions. When the Methodist leader John Wesley visited him, he found Gordon studying the Hebrew scriptures and preoccupied with religious questions.<sup>110</sup> The blue-stocking Hannah More also reported Gordon's preoccupation with the Hebrew prophets: "I heard from a person who attended the trial of Lord George Gordon, that the noble prisoner (as the papers call him) had a quarto Bible open before him all the time, and was very angry because he was not permitted to read four chapters of Zecharia."<sup>111</sup> More then repeated the rumors that Gordon was a sensualist who unashamedly consorted with whores. For a time, Gordon attended the sermons of the Methodist "revivalist" Martin Madan, who advocated the legalization of polygamy and concubinage as a solution to problems of adultery, prostitution, and abortion.<sup>112</sup> Arguing that the Hebrew scriptures and Mosaic law provided the basis of all truth, Madan referred to conversations with Jewish friends who convinced him that the Jews were more compassionate and wise about sexual desires and problems than were the Christians.

Charges also circulated that Gordon indulged himself in the "Celestial Bed," designed by his Scottish friend Dr. James Graham, which infused the body with electric and magnetic currents in order to increase potency and fertility.<sup>113</sup> A radical Freemason, Dr. Graham believed that "scientifically" increased sexual vigor would serve the revolutionary cause. The fact that the Jewish religion--especially in its Cabalistic and Sabbatian form--did not separate sexuality from spirituality may have strengthened its appeal to Gordon. Like Watson, he admired the writing of the radical Covenanter Samuel Rutherford who portrayed Scotland's marriage to the God of Israel in "startlingly sexual imagery"--the Jewish church will join the Protestant church in Jesus's bed of love and suck each other's breasts.<sup>114</sup> From Dr. Falk's diary and reports on his Sabbatian brethren, it seems that rituals of sexual magic were practised by some members of the sect.<sup>115</sup>

While he was in the Tower, Gordon was guarded by Colonel Rainsford, a kinsman of General Charles Rainsford, the Masonic colleague of Falk. According to Watson, "A gentleman in the tower, whom it is not safe to name, offered him his service, and

was the faithful bearer of his correspondence."<sup>116</sup> Thus, it is possible that Gordon made contact with Falk through the Rainsfords. At this time, according to Archenholz, Gordon had supporters in the Jewish community. After visiting Masonic lodges and the Jewish neighborhood around Wellclose Square, Archenholz attended the trial of Gordon, where he was "a witness of a very singular scene between him [Gordon] and a German Jew who appeared at his bar in rags."<sup>117</sup> With "great effrontery," the Jew offered himself as a security for £300 pounds. Archenholz guessed that "some rich Jews present probably slipped the bills to him," for the German Jew actually had the cash. It is certainly possible that Falk sent some of his banking friends to offer bail for Gordon, who would later call upon those bankers to support his scheme for financial pacifism. Among Gordon's loyal Quaker friends was Dr. John Coakley Lettsom, who was also intimate with the Goldsmid brothers, the powerful bankers who were patrons of Dr. Falk.<sup>118</sup>

Some months after Gordon's release from the Tower, a strange pamphlet appeared, entitled The Fourth Book of the Chronicles, or the Second Book of Gordon, to which are added the Chapters of Donellan, etc., originally written in Arabic by an Oriental Sage in the Time of the Jewish Captivity (London: printed for the translator by J. Wade, 1781). The book related in Scriptural style the trial of Gordon and included his portrait by J. Lodge.<sup>119</sup> The peculiar reference to an Oriental sage who wrote in Arabic may have applied to Dr. Falk and/or his emissary Cagliostro, who was currently uttering pseudo-Arabic conjurations in the Egyptian lodges in France.<sup>120</sup> In fact, Gordon's unexplained reason for traveling to Paris in late 1782 may have been linked to the Masonic endeavours of Falk and Cagliostro.<sup>121</sup> According to Moses Margoliouth, a nineteenth-century historian of Anglo-Judaica and Freemasonry, Gordon secretly converted to Judaism before leaving for Paris.<sup>122</sup>

Margoliouth possessed a Hebrew manuscript letter written by Meyer Joseph, who claimed that as a young man he acted as Gordon's preceptor in Judaism--before the 1782 visit to Paris. Meyer or Michael Joseph was the Anglicized name of Meyer Königsberger (b. 1673), a Hebrew poet who came to London from Germany in 1780.<sup>123</sup> It is possible that Joseph was sent to London by Cagliostro, who had visited the Masonic lodges in Königsberg in February 1779.<sup>124</sup> The new immigrant evidently met Dr. Falk, whom he later praised as a "pious and benevolent" benefactor of the Great Synagogue.<sup>125</sup> Thus, Joseph may have been the German

Jew, in rags, who offered himself as security for Gordon's bond. According to Joseph, Gordon visited and read publicly in the synagogue; he was "pretty well tutored in Jewish rites and customs, and was able to read Hebrew with some degree of fluency."<sup>126</sup> If Gordon studied under Falk, the secrecy of his conversion would have been in keeping with Sabbatian beliefs.<sup>127</sup> In a correspondence that is now lost, Gordon applied to Rabbi Tevele Schiff, of Duke's Place Synagogue, and asked to be received into the Jewish fold. Schiff received his appointment through Falk's assistance and remained his patron and protector.<sup>128</sup> Unfortunately, the date of Gordon's overture is unknown, as are Schiff's reasons for rejecting his request.

During the months before he went to Paris, Gordon demonstrated unusual knowledge and concern about Jewish political affairs on the Continent. On 14 March 1782 he wrote to Joseph II, "Emperor of Germany and King of the Romans," to condemn his "ordinance against the Jews" and to recommend changes in it.<sup>129</sup> Though Gordon's letter is lost, he apparently pointed out the shortcomings in Joseph II's "Edict of Toleration" which, as Venturi points out, "rather more posed than resolved the Jewish question in his empire."<sup>130</sup> Gordon, who was accurate in recognizing the Edict's deficiencies, may have been prompted by Falk, whose fellow Masons in the "Asiatic Brethren" were struggling to find their way in Austria.<sup>131</sup> The Emperor Joseph was a rationalist Mason, and he was sympathetic to the messianic Cabalist Jacob Frank, who with his disciples had converted to Catholicism. However, Joseph was not aware that the Frankists secretly maintained their Sabbatian beliefs and maintained contacts with Dr. Falk and other clandestine members of the sect. As Falk may have informed Gordon, the Emperor did not approve of "les confréries esoteriques du type de la Stricte Observance ou des Frères Asiatiques."<sup>132</sup>

Whatever projects Gordon may have undertaken with Falk were aborted one month later, for on 17 April 1782 the "Grand Cophta" unexpectedly died. General Rainsford, who shared in Falk's ambitions for the "Asiatic Brethren," wrote to a frère in Paris about their Masonic project:

"As to the Kabbala, all is upset by the unexpected death of Dr. Falk...up to now I have found nothing certain relating to that famous Rabbi, whether he is genuine or a knave... Believe me, I have found news about that Jew, among the Jews of Algiers and they have told me some extraordinary

stories about him, even so far as to attribute their success against the Spaniards to him--voila! I don't know his real origin... I have found some rather curious MSS. at Algiers in Hebrew relating to the Society of Rosicrucians, which exists at present under another name with the same forms. I hope, moreover, to be admitted to their true knowledge...<sup>133</sup>

Gordon may have learned of Falk's claims to revolutionary powers--whether in the Jewish resistance to Spanish aggression in Algiers or in the Polish nationalists' resistance to Russian aggression. After all, Prince Adam Czartorisky, who sought Falk's Cabalistic assistance and who was called a "half-Sabbatian," and Prince Marius Lubomirsky, who converted to Judaism and married a Sabbatian, were also kinned to Gordon. As members of French-affiliated Écossais lodges, these Polish Freemasons had benefited from the infusion of Cabalistic mysticism into the higher Scottish degrees.

On 13 May 1782 Gordon revealed his immersion in Jewish and Covenanting fantasies, when he crashed a secret meeting of Scottish noblemen and gentlemen at St. Albans Tavern, London.<sup>134</sup> Of the 100 attendees, nearly all can be identified as Masons, whom the government was wooing with places and pensions. Gordon repeated his boasts of Stuart ancestry and aristocratic foreign kinsmen (i.e., Polish). He then argued that any militia raised in Scotland must be limited to Presbyterians. He harangued the shocked assembly with quotes from the Hebrew scriptures and National Covenant, which declared Scotland's uniquely Jewish relation to God. As Williamson observes, in the inflamed minds of the Covenanters, "Scots and Jews had indeed become brethren in the world created within the revolutionary northern realm."<sup>135</sup> When Gordon demanded that the attendees defend "the true Church of Jehovah" in order to receive the "countenance and blessings of the God of Israel," a "great uproar arose in the Assembly...and the Cry was, Order! Order! Order!."<sup>136</sup>

Having alarmed his more conservative countrymen with his allusions to "these rebellious times," Gordon hoped to find support in France. He must have kept his plans secret, for almost nothing is known of Gordon's visit to Paris in late 1782. He claimed that he was presented to Marie-Antoinette and many aristocrats, who probably included the Duke of Chartres. Gordon would later greet Chartres as an old friend when the Duke visited London. In 1782 Chartres shared Gordon's interest in the

welfare of Protestants and he hoped to bring back the Edict of Nantes, which once granted rights to French Protestants.<sup>137</sup> Gordon was appalled by the abuses of power carried out by the Queen and her Court--a view shared (not so disinterestedly) by Chartres. Perhaps Falk had advised Gordon to contact Chartres, who not only wore the Baal Shem's magical talisman but was now the most powerful Grand Master in Europe. Colson and Roth believe that Gordon also met Cagliostro, for he and the magus would demonstrate "an immediate and close intimacy" in 1786 in London.<sup>138</sup> Provocatively, Chartres subsequently joined Cagliostro's Egyptian Rite.

Gordon may have learned of Cagliostro's strategy of gaining the support of powerful bankers when he began a Masonic campaign in a town. As Cagliostro later boasted:

As soon as I set foot in any country, I there find a banker who supplies me with everything I want; thus in France, Sarrasin of Basle or Mons. Sancolaz [Sancotar] at Lyons, would give me their whole fortunes, were I to ask for it.<sup>139</sup>

According to Watson, Gordon returned from Paris "more firmly resolved than ever to prosecute the plan of general reform."<sup>140</sup> Perhaps inspired by Gordon, Cagliostro planned to re-visit London in 1783, but he was delayed in Bordeaux by the importunities of Freemasons who begged him to establish an Egyptian lodge.<sup>141</sup>

Unfortunately for the historian, in 1783 Watson entered the University of Aberdeen, where he completed a Master of Arts degree in March 1787.<sup>142</sup> He was thus unable to shed much light on Gordon's increasing immersion in Judaism during those years. From other witnesses, we learn that Gordon continued his study of Hebrew and visited synagogues, where he discussed Jewish traditions and beliefs with the members. In a second edition of his pamphlet Innocence Vindicated and the Intrigues of Popery and its Abettors Displayed, published in summer 1783, Gordon defended not only his actions in the Gordon Riots but added a eulogy to the "plain, natural unaffected manners and phrases of the Hebrews."<sup>143</sup> The language and morals of the ancient Jews are "the surest and quickest ways of moving the hearts" of those who are not perverted and hardened "through the ensnaring corruptions of deceitful Courts." Identifying himself with Moses, he pointed out that Moses "was as high-bred a courtier as Pharaoh" and that Moses mastered the occult knowledge of the

Egyptians in order to turn it against them: "He easily detected and exposed the paltry tricks and Egyptian devices of the different coalitions of sorcerers and magicians in the royal cabinet." That Falk and Cagliostro claimed to teach the true Jewish origins of the Egyptian Cabala was probably relevant to Gordon's odd statements. Gordon went on to praise the Jews' "great and religious pattern of opposition to tyranny," and he looked forward to the happy time when the Lord "shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root; Israel will blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit."

On 26 August 1783, Gordon sent a letter to Elias Lindo, Nathan Salomon, and other Jewish financiers, urging them to oppose the government's commercial negotiations with France. Larding his proposal with Hebrew phrases ("Shemah Israel! Shemah Koli!"), Gordon assured them that "The eyes of all Israel are upon you...Believe me, Israel! I am your friend."<sup>144</sup> He then warned them not to believe George III's "present servants" and to stand firm with the Protestants in their rightful demands in Europe and America. Elias Lindo, a wealthy merchant, was definitely a Freemason, and Nathan Salomon, lay head of the synagogue, was probably one.<sup>145</sup> An intimate friend of the Goldsmid brothers, Nathan Salomon greatly admired Gordon and introduced him to important Jews in the City. It was at this time that Gordon launched his remarkable scheme to convince Jewish bankers world-wide to refuse to grant credits to governments for the purpose of making war.<sup>146</sup> As Watson recalled,

...Lord George...wrote a variety of papers upon finance, and distributed them amongst the Jews in England and Holland—he knew that as long as Ministers could borrow with facility, the war system would never cease; what they cannot accomplish by valour, they will attempt to achieve by gold, and his design was to shew the incapacity of them all to pay; every government in Europe (in his opinion) being on the eve of bankruptcy.<sup>147</sup>

In another letter to Emperor Joseph II, Gordon claimed that by 18 September 1783, the "reproaches, insults, and injuries" inflicted on him by anti-Semitic Austrian agents in London convinced him of the insincerity of Joseph's Edict of Toleration.<sup>148</sup> Gordon then threw himself into the campaign of the "Patriots" in the Netherlands, who resisted the attempt of the Emperor to extend Austrian control. In November 1784, in a bizarre display of his strategy of Scottish threat and radical

subversion, he marched to St. James dressed in a Dutch naval uniform and carrying an immense Highland broadsword.<sup>149</sup> He laid the sword at the feet of the Dutch ambassador and persuaded the Dutch Guard to "rest their forelocks" and signify "their attachment to the Protestant cause."

Appealing to the discontented, unemployed sailors and soldiers who thronged to London, Gordon vowed that the Atholl Highlanders and thousands of sailors were ready to fight against Popery in Holland. It may be relevant that the Third and Fourth Dukes of Atholl had served as Grand Masters of Scotland and of the British "Ancients" system (in 1771-72 and 1775-81, respectively).<sup>150</sup> Moreover, the Fourth Duke had persuaded the Grand Lodge of Scotland to break off relations with the "Moderns." Thus, the appearance of the name George Gordon on the register of an "Ancients-Atholl" lodge (#225) in 1784 suggests some kind of political-Masonic maneuvering.<sup>151</sup>

By September 1785, rumors circulated that Gordon had secretly converted to Judaism. The lurid tabloid Rambler's Magazine broke the story in a wicked article entitled "The Loss of the Prepuce, or Lord George Riot Suffering a Clipping in Order to Become a Jew."<sup>152</sup> The journalist portrayed Gordon conversing with Mordecai, who speaks a burlesque-version of Frenchified English. When Gordon declaims, "I love the Jews, and the Emperor knows I do...but he seems to pay very little attention to the hints I have repeatedly given him," Mordecai replies:

Vat you say be very true--he no love les Juifs: he be one dam bad prince. I wish your lordship was emperor--you would sett all de world to rights dans un instant. Vous ave un tete--you have got a head--you knows things well. I wish you was gran sovereign of tout le Monde, of all de world.

After a comical negotiation on ways of disguising pork as mutton, Gordon agrees to be circumcized. Mordecai assures him that if he "vent vidout breeches, as dey do in Scotland, you not have de trouble to unbutton." Then his daughter Suzannah emerges with a pair of scissors and proceeds to clip Gordon's prepuce. It was probably from this date that Gordon became known as "Lord Crop." In the accompanying engraved print, a small boy points to an open Hebrew book, while a bearded Jew dressed in slouch hat and robes, reads on the sidelines. Gordon himself would later dress in the same garb of a Polish or Hasidic rabbi--a costume

that would eventually make a startling appearance in William Blake's Jerusalem.<sup>153</sup>

A few months before Rambler's broke the story, Gordon was in friendly relations with the Prince of Wales and his intimate friend the Duke of Chartres, now Duke of Orleans, who visited London in 1785. According to a rare Masonic pamphlet, the rebellious Prince of Wales--who despised his father George III--was secretly initiated into Freemasonry that year, probably under the aegis of the visiting Grand Master of France.<sup>154</sup> In summer 1785, while Orleans was at Brighton with the Prince, the latter asked Gordon to entertain Madame de Genlis, an initiate of Cagliostro's female lodge ("Isis") and collaborator in Orleans's Masonic schemes.<sup>155</sup> Gordon subsequently visited Scotland in winter 1785-1786, where he evoked cries of "Gordon and Liberty!" from the crowds that watched his political campaign against his family's conservative candidate.<sup>156</sup> Though the name George Gordon is listed as Senior Grand-Warden in the Scottish Grand Lodge in November 1785, it is not clear if he is our man.<sup>157</sup> Worried by these radical outbursts in Scotland, a conservative English publisher re-issued (in 1786) James Howell's seventeenth-century claim that the Scots are descendants of the Jews and Nathaniel Crouch's sensational account of the arrival of a shipload of Sabbatian Jews in Aberdeen in 1666.<sup>158</sup>

When Gordon returned to London in early 1786, he followed with passionate interest the bizarre trial of the Diamond Necklace, a scandal that rocked the throne of France. Cagliostro and Cardinal Rohan, who had been arrested on orders of the French Queen, became the vehicles of the smoldering discontent throughout France. While Cagliostro was accused of being the "Wandering Jew and Anti-Christ," Rohan was accused of conspiring with the Orleanist-Masonic faction to take over the government. The case was watched nervously by the British government, for it reeked of earlier French-Jacobite-Masonic conspiracies. On 5 April 1786 the Gentleman's Magazine described an unholy trio who must have given George III and Prime Minister Pitt nightmares:

The Duke de Fitz-James, grandson of the Pretender, accompanied the Duke of Orleans from Paris here...On their arrival they went to Gray's jeweller in Bond Street, on business relative to the Cardinal Rohan, whose part they warmly espouse. His R. H. the Prince of Wales happening to be there...invited them to dinner...and the three



Princes spent a most chearful afternoon and evening together at Carlton House.

Since Gray the jeweller had allegedly received the famous diamonds from Cagliostro's enemy Madame de La Motte, Orleans hoped to gather information from him to use against the Queen. Moreover, Orleans had recently participated in Cagliostro's Cabalistic rituals and still wore Falk's politically potent amulet. The former Jacobite Fitz-James was a devoted member of Orleans's system of Écossais Freemasonry.<sup>159</sup>

While reading of Cagliostro's bold and flamboyant protests against arbitrary power, Gordon was amused to learn that he himself had been ex-communicated by the Archbishop of Canterbury on 7 April 1786. He laughingly replied, "To expel me from a society to which I never belonged is an absurdity worthy of an Archbishop."<sup>160</sup> On 17 May the Public Advertiser, which was always sympathetic to Gordon, explained the serious ramifications of the ex-communication, for Gordon could no longer serve on juries, be a witness in court, recover lands, or attend Christian services. As Gordon continued to ignore the Archbishop's summons, the newspaper reported on 13 May that he "is not yet committed to Newgate" but "imprisonment is looked for every hour."

While the Public Advertiser carried sympathetic accounts of Gordon and Cagliostro, it also reported on Masonic developments at home and abroad. On 29 May and 13 June 1786, the paper reported that Joseph II had suppressed all Masonic lodges in the Austrian Netherlands, while in England the flourishing lodges advertised their meetings in the free press. As journals all over Europe reported on Cagliostro's Egyptian Rite, the trial in Paris became a lurid showcase for conflicting images of Masonry. Cagliostro was acquitted by the rebellious Parlement in May, and huge crowds cheered him on his release from the Bastille. But the Court confiscated Cagliostro's property and then banished him from France. "Flying from slavery to freedom," Cagliostro arrived in London on 16 June. There he was taken up as a hero by the radical Freemasons in the Prince of Wales' circle, but his boldest champion was Gordon--with fateful results for both.<sup>161</sup> Gordon later claimed that Cagliostro sought his protection, which certainly suggests an earlier acquaintance or a mutual link through Dr. Falk.

Encouraged by Gordon, Cagliostro and his French lawyer

composed an open Lettre du peuple francais (1786), which circulated widely despite the effort of the French government to confiscate copies.<sup>162</sup> Cagliostro described a Kafka-esque world in which innocent citizens could be hauled from their beds and plunged into the dungeons of the Bastille, where they would rot for years, without even knowing the identity of their accuser or the nature of the charges against them. He warned the citizens of France that everything they cherished was vulnerable to the whimsical orders of arbitrary ministers:

Am I coming back to France? Only when the site of the Bastille has become an open square...Let your parliaments work for this happy revolution. Then will reign over you a prince who will seek his glory in abolishing the royal warrants, and in convening your States-General. Realizing that abuse of power destroys, in the end, power itself, he will be the first among Frenchmen.<sup>163</sup>

Probably because of his association with Gordon, Cagliostro had a hard time finding a printer in London bold enough to publish it. Though he did not directly attack Louis XVI, allowing that the King had been misinformed, most of his readers knew that the reformist Prince of his utopian vision was the Duke of Orleans.

Cagliostro's letter so incensed the French government that his friends feared he would be kidnapped and returned to the Bastille. Thus, Gordon insisted on accompanying him when Cagliostro was summoned to the French embassy. Cagliostro peremptorily refused the ambassador's "invitation" to return to France, and Gordon subsequently published passionate defenses of his friend in the Public Advertiser (22 and 24 August 1786). He was fully aware of the risk he ran in attacking Marie-Antoinette and the French government, and he promised H.S Woodfall, the editor, that he would pay for any prosecution against him. Interestingly, Woodfall had earlier been prosecuted for publishing a radical attack on the Glorious Revolution, which charged the Hanoverians with "bribery, corruption, dissipation, gambling," and the debauchment of the morals of the British people." According to Monod, the author was probably the antiquarian Joseph Ritson, a Jacobite who became a radical republican.<sup>164</sup>

With Woodfall's paper backing Cagliostro and Gordon, the French government pushed its resident spy, Theveneau de Morande, to attack the flamboyant duo in the Courier de l'Europe. As the

newspaper war raged, the Prince of Wales began to get cold feet about his dabbling in the Egyptian Rite, and he backed off from his public support of Cagliostro. Morande cleverly attacked Cagliostro's partisans in London who, though they included many illustrious persons, were deceived by his Masonic tricks. In an anonymous pamphlet, Morande revealed Cagliostro's earlier Jacobite pretenses when he allegedly assumed the name of "Count Balthymore" and claimed a confidential relationship with Cardinal York (Henry Stuart, brother of the Young Pretender).<sup>165</sup> After attacking the "mad" George Gordon, Morande tried to intimidate his brother "le lord Wm G..." and other Scottish nobles into supporting the government's campaign against the radical Masons.

A visitor from Germany, the novelist Sophie von la Roche, left an interesting account of Cagliostro and Gordon in September 1786.<sup>166</sup> Friendly with many of Cagliostro's Masonic disciples in Europe, she elicited frank remarks from the two embattled radicals. She noted that the Prince of Wales certainly welcomed Cagliostro, but that now the "Cophta" spends nearly all his time with Gordon. Cagliostro looks upon different religions as so many different systems of education, but he likes the Catholics least, because their clergy are too powerful and mistreat humanity and nature. Especially by maintaining monasteries and advocating celibacy, the Catholics act against nature's law. Gordon spoke highly of the principles of the Jewish religion and quizzed her about Moses Mendelssohn. He promised that he would never encourage violence, for the earlier riots still grieved him deeply.

That same month, Gordon caused a sensation when he led a huge crowd to the French Embassy and publicly burned a copy of the Treaty of Commerce signed between France and England. Watson charged that the treaty was an unholy alliance between two autocratic courts which aimed to crush the growing democratic spirit.<sup>167</sup> But "Lord George and burning" were enough to set the government machinery of repression into serious action, and Cagliostro's recruitment to the Egyptian Rite fell off precipitously. Perhaps pushed by his artistic supporters--Richard Cosway, Phillipe de Louthembourg, and Francesco Bartolozzi--Cagliostro decided to approach members of the "Ancient" lodges and the Swedenborgians, many of whom were Masons, to bolster his position.

On 1 November Cagliostro, a party of French disciples, and

presumably Gordon visited the Lodge of Antiquity, #2, which was meeting at Freemasons Tavern. Cagliostro was introduced to the lodge by the Chevalier Bartholomew Ruspini, dental surgeon and Masonic mentor to the Prince of Wales.<sup>168</sup> Ruspini was a founding member of the "Nine Muses" lodge, which was a branch of the radical "Neuf Soeurs" in Paris. He had long laboured to link the "Ancient" lodges with sympathetic lodges on the Continent. He evidently hoped that Cagliostro would help heal the breach within the Antiquity Lodge, which had split the ranks of liberal and theosophical Masons. Among the French visitors to Antiquity #2 was the Marquis de Vichy, who reported to the Masonic convention of Philaléthes that he was very satisfied with the workings of the Egyptian Rite, as he observed them in London.<sup>169</sup> According to a later account by a lodge member, so were most of the attendees at the Antiquity lodge.<sup>170</sup>

On the next day, Cagliostro placed an ad in the Morning Herald (2 November 1786), which appealed to "all true Masons" to join with the Swedenborgians in a common effort at "regeneration." Announcing that "the time is at hand when the building of the new Temple or New Jerusalem 3, 8, 20, 17, 8 [church] must begin," he told them to meet the next day at O'Reilly's tavern on Great Queen Street. There they would "plan for laying the first stone of the foundation of the True 3, 8, 20, 17, 8 [church]." Though most British historians have assumed that Cagliostro got no response to this ad, Nicholas de Bonneville (who was attending meetings of the "Modern" Grand Lodge in London) testified that the ad "fit beaucoup de bruit."<sup>171</sup> Cagliostro's former disciple in Courland, Charlotte von der Recke, an initiate of his female rite, and his fascinated critic Johann Wolfgang Goethe, a Rose-Croix Mason, both heard that Cagliostro was welcomed by the Swedenborgians and Masons in London.<sup>172</sup>

Despite the improving fortunes of Gordon and Cagliostro in the first three weeks of November, Morande soon located new allies among the Freemasons, who added their satire to his vendetta. On 21 November the engraver James Gillray published a satiric print, entitled "A Masonic Anecdote, designed by a Brother Mason, a Witness of the Scene."<sup>173</sup> As Cagliostro stands before the lodge, he asks, "Are you shot through the heart? take a drop of my Balsamo." The English members, deep in their cups, drunkenly shout "Huzzas!" and insult the visiting French brothers, who mutter "Quelle insolence." Beneath the print, a doggerel "Abstract of the Arabian Count's memoirs" appears:

Born God knows where, supported, God knows how.  
 From whom descended...difficult to know.  
 LORD CROP [Gordon] adopts him as a bosom friend,  
 And madly dares his character defend...  
 This self-dubb'd Count, some few years since became  
 A Brother Mason in a borrowed name...

Spurred on by the wide circulation of Gillray's print, Morande may have pressured another Mason, this time a Frenchman, to publish a critical article in the General Advertiser (29 November 1786). Breaking all Masonic rules of secrecy, the Frenchman described the meeting at Antiquity and claimed that Cagliostro was insulted and exposed by "Brother Mash," a British member. On 2 December, Brother Cooper sent a rejoinder to the paper, claiming the previous article was a misrepresentation. On 6 December Brother Black showed Gillray's print to the lodge and dismissed it as a falsehood. Curiously, Bonneville saw in the increasing popularity of Cagliostro's Egyptian Rite a challenge to the secular, deistic aims of the Berlin Freemasons. Influenced by Morande's charges, he would soon publish a wild exposé that claimed that the Jesuits had infiltrated the Écossais lodges and were still hoping for a Stuart restoration!<sup>174</sup>

In late November, Cagliostro and Gordon fought back by publishing the Lettre du Comte de Cagliostro au peuple anglois (1786). He revealed that a gang of criminals had long sought his precious Cabalistic manuscripts that enabled him to predict lottery winners. He also appealed to the sympathy and protection of British citizens who had long stood for freedom. Though the French court pressed the British government to get rid of Cagliostro, George III and Pitt were more concerned about Gordon. As he built popular support, he became more reckless and defiant. When Gordon visited the prisoners at Newgate and then published a protest against the legal penalties imposed on them, the government decided to move. In a curious mélange of Biblical exhortation and political ranting, Gordon condemned the severity of the British legal system, especially in its transportation of minor offenders to isolated penal colonies. The prisoners cry aloud from their dungeons and prisons that "the true record of the Almighty is falsified and erased by the Lawyers and Judges (who sit with their backs to the words of the living God and the fear of men before their faces) till the streets of our city have run down with a stream of blood."<sup>175</sup>

George III and Pitt decided that Gordon had finally gone too far, and on 23 January 1787 he was summoned to court. Unable to obtain the services of his brilliant cousin Thomas Erskine, Gordon attempted to defend himself with a series of clever ploys and legal games that held the prosecution at bay. The opposition newspapers rallied to his case, which soon became a cause célèbre. The court proceedings dragged on from February to June, as the government mounted intense surveillance on Gordon's associates and "irregular" Freemasons in an effort to build a stronger case. In the meantime, Cagliostro's friends feared he too would be arrested. Thus, in January he and his wife secretly moved to Hammersmith Terrace, where they hid in the home of the artist Phillipe de Loutherbourg, a member of the Egyptian Rite. While the Cagliostros quietly practiced alchemy and Cabalistic séances with their Swedenborgian and Masonic supporters, Gordon continued to defy the government.

Having received his university degree, Watson returned to London, where he evidently helped to build Masonic support for Gordon. On 23 April, a petition to Gordon was published in the Morning Post. Signed by Sir Watkins Lewes, a Welsh Freemason and former Jacobite Mayor of London, it identified Gordon as President of the "Society of Friends of Freedom," and begged him to name the day on which he would meet the Stewards of the Society to fix the day for their anniversary festival.<sup>176</sup> Gordon later wrote the Abbé Henri Gregoire, a radical Mason and advocate of Jewish emancipation, about the "dinner meetings" of these "Friends of Freedom":

You ask me, is true liberty near to begin her realm in the three realms? We have eating and drinking clubs, as Lord Fitzgibbon denominates them. A certain restless faction... are suspected to be the contrivers, promoters, and leaders of these eating and drinking societies, who are themselves ignorant of their master's design...A toast from the Chair to the immortal and glorious memory of King William...and the nine huzzas that accompany it, promote such a charge of glasses, that all regeneration operations and reformation work is soon after drowned and overwhelmed in bawdy songs, or evaporated in smoke and dullness...<sup>177</sup>

The bawdy cheers and heavy drinking of English lodge meetings were portrayed in Gillray's satire on Cagliostro and "Lord Crop." Though Gordon was writing cautiously from his prison cell

(his letters were regularly inspected), Gregoire would certainly have interpreted the "master" as a lodge master and the "regeneration operations" as high-degree rituals. Moreover, Gordon's name--along with Robert Watson, Watkins Lewes, Thomas Erskine, Chevalier Ruspini, and many Jews--appears in records of the Grand Master's Lodge in 1787-1788.<sup>178</sup> The name of William Sharp, radical Swedenborgian and artistic colleague of William Blake, is a provocative addition.

As Gordon's trial approached, Cagliostro secretly left London and sought refuge with the Sarasins, his wealthy banking friends, in Switzerland. After Gordon's conviction on a series of trumped up charges--libel upon the administrators of British law and upon the characters of Marie-Antoinette and Catherine the Great (whose sexual mores he had lampooned), he managed to avoid arrest and slipped out of the country to Holland. There he took refuge with his Jewish friends (including, perhaps, the Boas brothers who were then involved in political intrigue).<sup>179</sup> According to Archenholz, who reported on Masonic and political developments in the Hamburg-based British Mercury, Gordon planned to join Cagliostro in Switzerland, where the Egyptian Rite was flourishing.<sup>180</sup> But the Dutch magistrates succumbed to pressure from the French court, and they shipped Gordon--under full military guard--back to England on 22 July. Archenholz announced: "Poor Lord George!--cannot find a resting place for the soles of his feet--even his good friends the Dutch have behaved uncivilly to him--the Jews have refused him circumcision."<sup>181</sup> Though reports appeared that Gordon had gone to Scotland to seek refuge at Gordon Castle, he disappeared for six months. When the government located him in the Birmingham ghetto in December 1787, he appeared in the full beard and long robes of a Polish Jew. He would spend the rest of his life in prison, while the government tried to exterminate "the Gordoniad" from its Jacobite-Jacobin nightmare.

In the annual mock election for a comical M.P. for Garrett, a candidate declared himself for the cause of his "friend Gordon"; he would "discover the longitude among the Jews of Dukes Place and the secret of masonry."<sup>182</sup> The candidate also threatened to expose the "informing busy bookseller of Spitalfields," who was thrown out of the synagogue as a Christian spy, and who evidently supplied the government with information on Gordon's hiding place. Probably in reaction to the charges about Cagliostro, Gordon and revolutionary Freemasonry, as well as Gordon's reckless indiscretion about

Mrs. Fitzherbert, the Prince of Wales opened his private, namesake lodge in August 1787, which consisted of members strictly loyal to his political agenda.<sup>183</sup> The Prince's brothers, all Freemasons, and probably the Prince himself (incognito) visited Gordon in his Newgate cell and enjoyed his Biblical jeremiads against the policies of their despised father.<sup>184</sup> Their uncle, William Duke of Gloucester, corresponded with Masons in Lyons about Cagliostro, and he hoped to introduce certain Cabalistic rituals into his English lodge. Their younger brother, Edward Duke of Kent, would later meet Cagliostro in Switzerland, and though the meeting did not go well, Kent was initiated into the Swiss version of the Egyptian Rite.

For a halcyon period, Gordon may have believed that his imprisonment was no obstacle to his political and financial schemes. During the Regency Crisis, provoked by George III's mental illness, the Prince of Wales accepted a secret loan arranged by Abraham Goldsmid through the Boas brothers in Holland.<sup>185</sup> The loan was a replacement for a previous one from the Duke of Orleans, which Pitt scotched in December 1786, and an even more imprudent post-obit bond that would be paid on the death of George III, which the lenders backed away from in December 1788 when they realized its "treasonous" implications. As cooler heads warned the Heir Apparent, "the death of the King is anticipated, and therefore subjects the parties to all the penalties of petty treason." Did Gordon and Orleans then advise the Prince to work through the Goldsmids and Boases, who were Masons and former patrons of Dr. Falk? Orleans was in London at the time, and the royal brothers frequently visited Gordon in Newgate. Huish, an early nineteenth-century contemporary of the Prince of Wales, is the only biographer to even mention the top secret transactions.

Interestingly, Huish also pointed to the troubling role of Freemasonry in the radical politics of the time: "There was scarcely a throne in Europe, that was not shaken by the secret operations of that tremendous society [the Masonic Illuminati], which held its meetings everywhere and nowhere."<sup>186</sup> In France, rumors circulated that Orleans had participated in a Masonic ritual in which he acted out the symbolic murder of the French King.<sup>187</sup> La Marle suggests that Orleans transformed the old Jacobite-Templar degree of vengeance into a new Jacobin-Templar allusion to revolutionary politics. As the Whig leader Fox campaigned for the Prince of Wales during the Regency Crisis, he resorted to the Jacobite language of the hereditary right of



kings. Like Orleans, Fox would soon be accused of complicity in an international conspiracy of the Masonic Knights Templar.<sup>188</sup> In the increasing transvaluation of political terms, the Prince of Wales and his brothers were branded as rank Jacobites for their "Jacobin" role in the Regency Crisis.

Though Gordon may have initially believed his scheme of utilizing Jewish Freemasons for "financial pacifism" and "regeneration operations" would liberate England from its autocratic Hanoverian King, the recovery of George III and the Prince's steady loss of prestige subverted the dream. Moreover, the Boases went bankrupt as the Prince avoided repayment on their loan, and the Goldsmid brothers eventually became the main financial lenders for the Government's anti-Napoleonic military campaign.<sup>189</sup> Ironically, only Napoleon, who still hoped to play a Jacobite card in the early 1800's, and Dr. Watson, who brought the Stuart Papers from Rome to London, continued to link Écossais Freemasonry to revolutionary designs.<sup>190</sup>

Though Gordon was visited by streams of radicals from Britain and France, and though his supporters played significant roles in the London Corresponding Society and other reform organizations in the 1790's, his devotion to Judaism split his followers. Watson, who claimed never to understand why Gordon converted, noted that the rich Jews eventually abandoned Gordon while the poorer Jews looked upon him as a mystical Messiah.<sup>191</sup> After Gordon's death from jail fever in November 1793, Watson became increasingly militant and rejected his mentor's aversion to violence. As a free-thinker, he encouraged the deistic wings of the London Corresponding Society to join with the anti-clerical Masonic societies on the Continent. He would eventually be imprisoned on treason charges, escape to France, and help Napoleon plan an invasion of Britain.

Watson's break from the religious apocalypics that fueled Gordon and his admirers in the early 1790's--such as the pious shoemaker Thomas Hardy and the visionary artist William Blake--portended a divisive crisis in the British radical movement. Gordon, with all his eccentricity and recklessness, represented an authentic tradition of Scottish philo-Semitism and British millenarianism that had deep religious roots. He was admired by artists and artisans with similar beliefs, who found their world of millenaral reform taken over by the new radicals--skeptical "modern men" who no longer feared the God of Israel. But, when Blake--in his revolutionary prophecy Jerusalem--placed a figure

who strikingly resembled Gordon on the frontispiece and issued a call to Cabalistic Jews to join illuminated Christians in the rebuilding of Jerusalem, one suspects that the Masonic dreams of Falk, Cagliostro, and Gordon were not completely forgotten.<sup>192</sup>

\*\*\*\*\*

#### SELECTED DOCUMENTATION

- 
1. Percy Colson, The Strange History of Lord George Gordon (London: Robert Hale, 1937), xvii. A recent important exception to the "insanity" verdict is given in Iain McCalman's articles, "Mad Lord George and Madame La Motte: Riot and Sexuality in the Genesis of Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France," Journal of British Studies, 35 (1996), 358, and "New Jerusalems: Prophecy, Dissent and Radical Culture in England, 1786-1830," Enlightenment and Religion: Radical Dissent in Eighteenth-century Britain, ed. Knud Haakonssen (Cambridge : Cambridge UP, 1996), 319.
  2. The Gay Gordons (London: Chapman and Hall, 1908), 53; Ernst Friedrichs, Freemasonry in Russian and Poland (Berne, 1908), 57-62; Lusqif Haas, Sekta farmazoni warszawski (Warszawa, 1980), 85-87, 96, 177.
  3. Abraham Duker, "Polish Frankism's Duration," Jewish Social Studies, 25 (1963; Kraus rpt. 1972), 303.
  4. Poniatowski was the great-grandson of Lady Catherine Gordon; see J.M. Bulloch, Bibilography of the Gordons (Aberdeen University of Press, 1924), 175-76. For Poniatowski's Stuart, Jewish, and Masonic relations, see Claude Nordmann, La Crise du Nord au Début du XVIIIe siècle (Paris, 1962), 152-53; Stanislas Mnemon, La Conspiration du Cardinal Alberoni et Stanislas Poniatowski: la Franc-Maçonnerie et Stanislas Poniatowski (Cracovie Universite, 1909), 60-67.
  5. Christopher Hibbert, King Mob: The Story of Lord George Gordon and the Gordon Riots (London: Longman's, Green, 1958), 2.
  6. For the Solomonic-Masonic notions of the seventeenth-century Stuart kings, see my Restoring the Temple of Vision: Cabalistic Freemasonry and British Literature (forthcoming from SUNY Press).
  7. Henrietta Tayler, The Jacobite Epilogue (London: T. Nelson, 1941), 170-72; Frank McLynn, Charles Edward Stuart (1988; rpt. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1991), 161, 175, 202, 581n.65.
  8. Christopher Sinclair-Stephenson, Inglorious Rebellion: The Jacobite Risings of 1708, 1715, and 1719 (New York: St. Martin's, 1972), 136.

---

9. Robert S. Lindsay, A History of the Mason Lodge of Holyrood House (St. Luke's), Number 44 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 1935), I, 63-73, 225.

10. See my article, "The Young Pretender and Jacobite Freemasonry: New Light from Sweden on His Role as Hidden Grand Master," in Consortium on Revolutionary Europe 1750-1850: Selected Papers, ed. Donald Horward (Florida State University, 1994), 363-72; also, C.C.F. Nettlebladt, Geschichte Freimaureische Systeme in England, Frankreich, und Deutschland (Berlin, 1879; facs. rpt. Wiesbaden: Dr. M. Sandig, 1972), 128-30, 249; J.E.S. Tuckett, "Dr. Begemann and the Alleged Templar Chapter at Edinburgh in 1745," Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, 33 (1920), 40-62.

11. On the Templars in Scotland, see Michael Baigent and Richard Leigh, The Temple and the Lodge (1989; rpt. London: Corgi, 1993), 102-15, 127-57. On the Jewish ancestry of Scots, see Arthur Williamson, "A Pil for Pork-Eaters": Ethnic Identity, Apocalyptic Promises, and the Strange Creation of the Judeo-Scots," in The Expulsion of the Jews: 1492 and After, eds. Raymond Waddington and Arthur Williamson (New York: Garland, 1994), 237-58.

12. For a Masonic manuscript dated 1665 which featured Hebrew lettering, Jewish symbolism, and Stuart loyalism, see John Thorpe, "Old Masonic Manuscript. A Fragment," Lodge of Research, No. 2429 Leicester. Transactions for the Year 1926-27, 40-48; for the 1675 contribution of Rabbi Leon "Templo" to restored Stuart Freemasonry, see A.L. Shane, "Jacob Judah Leon of Amsterdam (1602-1675) and his Models of the Temple of Solomon and the Tabernacle," Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, 196 (1983), 146-69.

13. John Toland, Reasons for Naturalizing the Jews in Great Britain and Ireland (London: J. Roberts, 1714), 37. For his association with occult societies in Scotland, see F.H. Heinemann, "John Toland and the Age of Enlightenment," Review of English Studies, 20 (1944), 127-28, and "John Toland, France, Holland, and Dr. Williams," Review of English Studies, 25 (1949), 347. Heinemann, who discussed Toland's Rosicrucian activities, was unaware of the long association of Rosicrucianism with Scottish Freemasonry. For Toland's role in a Masonic-style secret society in Holland in 1710, see Margaret Jacob, The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons, and Republicans (London, 1981).

14. For the attraction of many Jews to 17th-18th century Stuart Freemasonry, see my forthcoming article "Dr. Samuel Jacob Falk: a Sabbatian Adventurer in the Masonic Underground," in Jewish Messianism in the Early Modern Period, eds. Matt Goldish and Richard Popkin (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Press). Further information on Jewish Masons is given in Marcus Lipton, "Francis Francia--the Jacobite Jew," Transactions of Jewish Historical Society of England, 11 (1928), 190-205, and in John Shaftesley, "Jews in English Regular Freemasonry, 1717-1860," Transactions of Jewish Historical Society of England, 25 (1977), 150-209.

15. Henry Fielding, The Jacobite's Journal and Related Writings, ed. W.B. Colby (Wesleyan UP, 1975), 95-98, 103, 109.

16. *ibid.*, 281-85.

17. Laurence Bongie, "Voltaire's English, High Treason, and a Manifesto for Prince Charles," Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century, 171 (1977), 7-29.

18. R.S. Lindsay, Holyrood, 71-79.

19. Shane, "Jacob Judah Leon," 146-69; Robert F. Gould, The History of Freemasonry (New

---

York: J.C. Yorston, 1885), III, 186-217.

20. Bernard Jones, Freemasons' Guide and Compendium, rev.ed. (1950; London: George Harrap, 1956), 199-202, 495, 511.

21. Samuel Oppenheim, "The Jews and Masonry in the United States Before 1810," Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, 19 (1910), 1-2, 41, 76-87.

22. Hibbert, King Mob, 5.

23. Robert Watson, M.D., The Life of Lord George Gordon, with a Philosophical Review of His Political Conduct (London: H.D. Symonds, 1795), 6-7.

24. McLynn, Charles Edward Stuart, 290, 310.

25. Colson, Gordon, 32-33.

26. [Anon.], Wonderful Prophecies, Being a Dissertation on the Existence, Nature, and Extent of the Prophetic Powers in the Human Mind, 4th rev. ed. (London: M. Richie, 1795), 77.

27. Watson, Gordon, 79.

28. *ibid.*, 8.

29. F. W. Levander, "The Jerusalem Sols and Other London Societies of the Eighteenth Century," Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, 25 (1912), 29.

30. W. R. Denslow, Ten Thousand Famous Freemasons (Transactions of Missouri Lodge of Research, 1959), I, 155; John Brewer, Party Ideology and Popular Politics at the Accession of George III (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1976), 194-97, 312.

31. C.N. Batham, "A Famous French Lodge (Les Neuf Soeurs)," Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, 86 (1973), 312-17.

32. Hibbert, King Mob, 8.

33. Watson, Gordon, 9-10.

34. McLynn, Charles Edward Stuart, 519.

35. Colson, Gordon, 79.

36. See "Robert Watson, M.D. and F.S.A." Dictionary of National Biography; Graham Bain, The Thunderbolt of Reason, being the Story of Mr. Robert Watson of Elgin (Elgin: Almac Print, 1996). Though the date of Watson's return is unclear, I believe it was in 1779, shortly before he became Gordon's secretary. Though Iain McCalman doubts that Watson worked for Gordon in 1780, I see no reason to doubt Watson's claim, which was not questioned by contemporaries who knew both men. See McCalman's interesting article, "Controlling the Riots: Dickens, Barnaby Rudge and Romantic Revolution," forthcoming in History.

37. Bernard Fay, Revolution and Freemasonry (Boston: Little, Brown, 1935), 242-51.

38. Lindsay, Holyrood, I, 237; II, 611; Richard Sher, Church and University in the Scottish Enlightenment (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1985), 304-05.

39. Robert Watson, M.D. and F.S.A., The Political Works of Fletcher of Salton (London: H.D. Symonds, 1798), 39. On the Masonic origins of the United Irishmen, see A.T.Q. Stewart, A Deeper Silence: The Hidden Roots of the United Irish Movement (London: Faber and Faber, 1993).

40. See David Stevenson, The First Freemasons: Scotland's Early Lodges and Their Members (Aberdeen: Aberdeen UP, 1988), 28, 69-73; Allan Macinnes, Charles I and the Making of the Covenanting Movement (East Linton: Tuckwell, 1996), 168. On the Masonic-Templar

---

association with the oaths of the United Irishmen and United Englishmen, see Albert Goodwin, The Friends of Liberty (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1979), 436-39.

41. Nicholas Hans, "UNESCO of the Eighteenth Century: La Loge des Neuf Soeurs and its Venerable Master, Benjamin Franklin," Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, XCVII (1953), 512-24.

42. For Watson's later revolutionary career, see G. Bain, Thunderbolt, 9-28; also Andrew Lang, "A Wild Career," Illustrated London News (12 March 1892), 331; Marianne Elliott, Partners in Revolution: The United Irishmen and France (New Haven: Yale UP, 1982), 141-47, 178, 186; Mary Thale, Selections from the Papers of the London Corresponding Society, 1792-1799 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983), 20-24, 397.

43. Williamson, "'A Pil for Pork-Eaters,'" 237-58.

44. David Stevenson, Union, Revolution and Religion in 17th-Century Scotland (Aldershot: Variorum, 1997), 46.

45. James Howell, The Wonderful and Most Deplorable History of the Latter Times of the Jews (London, 1652), sig.A5v. Though Howell was initially a royalist, he had gone over to Cromwell by the time he published this edition of the chronicle Jossipon.

46. Watson, Gordon, 16.

47. ibid., 15.

48. ibid., 17-18.

49. Hans, "UNESCO," 512-24.

50. Hibbert, King Mob, 27.

51. Horace Walpole, Correspondence, ed. W.S. Lewis (New Haven: Yale UP, 1971), XXV, ix, 11.

52. [Francis Dobbs], Memoirs of Francis Dobbs...and His Prediction of the Second Coming, 2nd. rev. ed. (Dublin: J. Jones, 1800), 7.

53. Francis Dobbs, A Letter to the Right Honourable Lord North, on his Propositions in Favour of Ireland (Dublin: M. Mills, 1780), 15.

54. Francis Dobbs, Thoughts on Volunteers (Dublin: T. Mills, 1781), 9-10.

55. Bruce Lenman, The Jacobite Risings in Britain, 1689-1746 (London: Eyre Methuen, 1980), 291.

56. J.P. Jenkins, "Jacobites and Freemasons in Eighteenth-century Wales," Welsh History Review, 9 (1978-79), 392.

57. Francis Dobbs, A Concise View from History and Prophecy (London, 1800), 65, 159, 241-52; Clarke Garrett, Respectable Folly: Millenarians and the French Revolution (Johns Hopkins University, 1975), 118-19.

58. Colson, Gordon, 67.

59. Gould, History, III, 227-30; Hibbert, King Mob, 25-26.

60. Lord George Gordon, Innocence Vindicated and the Intrigues of Popery and its Abettors Displayed, 2nd ed. (London: R. Denham, 1783), I, 7-8.

61. ibid. I, 9.

- 
62. See McCalman, "Mad Lord George," 343-67.
63. *ibid.*, II, 20.
64. *ibid.*, I, 8.
65. *ibid.*, II, 15-16.
66. J. Paul DeCastro, The Gordon Riots (Oxford: Clarendon, 1926), 25-26.
67. Hibbert, King Mob, 195.
68. David Erdman, Blake: Prophet Against Empire, 3rd. rev. ed. (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1977), 10.
69. William Vincent [Thomas Holcroft], A Plain and Succinct Narrative of the Late Riots, 3rd. rev. ed. (London, 1780), "Appendix," 59.
70. Hibbert, King Mob, 195.
71. *ibid.*, 195.
72. Colson, Gordon, 107.
73. Watson, Gordon, 22.
74. Hibbert, King Mob, 132.
75. Fay, Revolution, 239-40.
76. For charges and counter-charges about Masonic complicity, see Jacob Bronowski, William Blake and the Age of Revolution, rev. ed. (London: Routledge, 1972), 23; J. Frome Wilkinson, Mutual Thrift (London, 1891), 12-16; George Smith, The Use and Abuse of Freemasonry (London: G. Kearsley, 1783), 249.
77. Wilkinson, Mutual, 25.
78. Jacques Grot, ed., Lettres de Grimm à l'Imperatrice Catherine II. Sbornik Imperatorskago Russago Istoricheskago Obschestva. 2nd. rev. ed., 44 (1885), 87.
79. The Empress had just driven out of Russia the Masonic leader Cagliostro, who would later collaborate with Gordon. See Constantin Photiades, Les Vies du Comte de Cagliostro (Paris: Editions Bernard Grasset, 1932), 176-81.
80. Watson, Gordon, 129.
81. Like his brothers, Thomas Erskine was probably already a Mason; his name appears with those of George Gordon and Robert Watson in the "Grand Master's Lodge Record" for 1788 (in Grand Lodge Library, London). See also Denslow, Ten Thousand, II, 25; Lindsay, Holyrood, I, 237; II, 611.
82. Mr. Erskine's Speech, at the Trial of Lord George Gordon, in the Court of King's Bench, on Monday, February 5, 1781 (London: Fielding and Walker, 1781), 84.
83. Watson, Gordon, 24.
84. See David Stevenson, The Origins of Freemasonry: Scotland's Century, 1590-1710 (Cambridge University Press, 1988), 203-04; Vincent Buranelli, The King and the Quaker: a Study of William Penn and James II (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962).
85. Colson, Gordon, 169-72. Professor Roth was an anonymous co-author with Colson and wrote the section on Falk and Cagliostro. Roth's widow Irene claims to be the great great granddaughter of Dr. Falk, and the Roths collected many documents about Falk and Gordon. I am grateful to Irene Roth for her assistance in my research.
86. According to the Count of Rantzow, Falk arrived in London circa 1740 (not 1742 as usually

- 
- claimed); see his Mémoires de Comte de Rantzow (Amsterdam: Pierre Mortier, 1741), I, 201-17.
87. Marsha Keith Schuchard, "Yeats and the Unknown Superiors: Swedenborg, Falk, and Cagliostro," in Secret Texts: The Literature of Secret Societies, ed. Marie Roberts and Hugh Ormsby-Lennon (New York: AMS Press, 1995), 114-68, and "Dr. Samuel Jacob Falk," forthcoming article.
88. Several Boases appear in registers at Grand Lodge Library, The Hague. In Register of the Grand Lodge, London, "New Castle Lodge of Harmony #26," appear the names of Abraham and Benjamin Goldsmid of Leman St., Goodman's Fields, initiated in January 1777.
89. Jacob Schatsky, The History of the Jews in Warsaw [Yiddish] (New York: Yiddish Scientific Institute, 1947-53), 88-89; Gay Gordons, 53.
90. Solomon Schechter, "The 'Baalshem'--Dr. Falk," Jewish Chronicle (9 March 1888), 15-16; M. Kukiel, Czartorisky and European Unity (1770-1861) (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1955).
91. Amedée Britsch, La maison d'Orleans à la fin de la Ancien Régime (Paris: Payot, 1926), 239.
92. Herman Adler, "The Baal Shem of London," Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England (1908), 155; Elkan Adler, ed., Jewish Travellers (London: G. Routledge, 1930), 357-59.
93. On Cagliostro's career, see Constantin Photiades, Count Cagliostro, trans. K. Shelvankar (London: Rider, 1932). The original French edition contains more thorough documentation.
94. William Wonnacott, "The Rite of Seven Degrees in London," Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, 39 (1926), 63-98. Also documents in London Grand Lodge, Wonnacott Files: "Falck, John Christian" (marginalia identifies him as the Baal Shem); MS. Minute Book of Lodge St. George de l'Observance, 1777-79.
95. Gordon P. Hills, "Notes on Some Contemporary References to Dr. Falk, the Baal-Shem of London, in the Rainsford Papers in the British Museum," Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England (1918), 98.
96. Gordon P. Hills, "Notes on the Rainsford Papers in the British Museum," Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, 26 (1913), 93-129.
97. Grot, Lettres de Grimm, 212-13.
98. Wilfrid-René Chettoui, Cagliostro et Catherine II: la satire impériale contre le Mage (Paris: Editions des Champs-Élysées, 1947), 51-54.
99. B.Ivanoff, "Cagliostro in Eastern Europe," Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, 11 (1927), 66-70.
100. London, Wellcome Institute: MS. 1047. Dr. E. Lalande's transcript of letter from Saltzmann to Willermoz (7 November 1780).
101. J.E.S. Tuckett, "Savalette de Langes, Les Philaletes, and the Council of Wilhelmsbad, 1782," Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, 30 (1917), 153-54.
102. Gershom Scholem, Du Frankisme au Jacobinisme (Paris: La Seule Gallimard, 1981), 39.
103. Michal Oron, "Dr. Samuel Falk and the Eibeschuetz-Emden Controversy," in Mysticism, Magic, and Kabbalah in Ashkenazi Judaism, ed. Karl Grözinger and Joseph Dan (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 243-56.
104. Gershom Scholem, Kabbalah (New York: Dorset Press, 1974), 277-309.
105. Scholem, Du Frankisme, 27-28.
106. De Castro, Gordon Riots, 16.
107. Colson, Gordon, 103-04.

- 
108. Cecil Roth attributed the portrait to John Singleton Copley, but the art historian Stephen Lloyd (Scottish National Portrait Gallery), who examined it with Mrs. Roth's permission, suggests that it was painted by Phillipe Jacques de Louthembourg.
109. J.W. de Archenholz, A Picture of England, new trans. (London, 1797), 177-78.
110. John Wesley, The Works of John Wesley (Grand Rapids: Zondervas, 1958), IV, 194-95.
111. Hannah More, Memoirs of the Life and Correspondence of Mrs. Hannah More, ed. William Roberts (New York: Harper, 1837), I, 118.
112. McCalman, "Mad Lord George," 358-59; Martin Madan, Thelyphthora (London: J. Dodsley, 1780-81), II, 335-36; III, 279, 352, 273-78.
113. J.S. Barwell, "The Ingenious Dr. Graham," The Saturday Book, ed. John Hadfield, XVI (1956), 174.
114. Arthur Williamson, "The Jewish Dimension of the Scottish Apocalypse," in Menasseh ben Israel and His World, eds. Y. Kaplan, H. Méchoulán, and R. Popkin (Leiden: Brill, 1989), 159-60.
115. Professor Michal Oron of Tel Aviv University will publish Hebrew and English editions of the diaries of Falk and his servant Hirsch Kalisch. For Falk's dream description of a phallic ritual, see her article "Dr. Samuel Jacob Falk and the Eibeschutz-Emden Controversy," in Mysticism, Magic, and Kabbalah in Ashkenazic Judaism, eds. Karl Grözinger and Joseph Dan (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 243-56. For the masturbation rituals practiced by some radical Sabbatians, see Elijah J. Schochet, The Hasidic Movement and the Gaon of Vilna (London: Jason Aronson, 1994), 44-48.
116. Watson, Gordon, 23.
117. Archenholz, Picture, 271-72.
118. J.J. Abraham, Lettsom: His Life, Times, Friends, and Descendants (London: Heineman, 1933), 251, 445.
119. *ibid.*, 423.
120. Ivanoff, "Cagliostro," 45-80.
121. Colson, Gordon, 171-72, 184.
122. Moses Margoliouth, The History of the Jews of Great Britain (London: Richard Bentley, 1851), II, 122-24.
123. Israel Solomons, "Lord George Gordon's Conversion to Judaism," Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England, Sessions 1911-1914 (London, 1715), 238.
124. Constantin Photiades, Count Cagliostro, trans. K.S. Shelvankar (London: Rider, 1932), 101-02. The original French edition contains more thorough documentation.
125. [Michael Joseph], Laws of the Congregation of the Great Synagogue, Duke's Place, London (London: J. Wertheimer, 1827), viii.
126. Margoliouth, History, II, 122.
127. According to the late Gedalia Yogev, the Prager Papers in the Public Record Office shed light on Gordon's conversion. Because the Jewish bankers featured in the papers include Falk's friends, Yogev's statement is intriguing. Unfortunately, when I attempted to examine the collection in the P.R.O., they began to crumble and were removed for conservation, which will allegedly take many years. For Yogev's reference, see his Diamonds and Coral: Anglo-Dutch



---

Jews and Eighteenth-Century Trade (Leicester: Leicester UP, 1978), 186.

128. Solomons, "Gordon's Conversion," 241; Cecil Roth, "Lord George Gordon's Conversion to Judaism," Essays and Portraits in Anglo-Jewish History (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1962), 187-210.

129. Solomons, "Gordon's Conversion," 229-30.

130. Franco Venturi, The End of the Old Regime in Europe, 1776-1789, trans. R. B. Litchfield (Princeton University Press, 1991), 646.

131. Jacob Katz, Jews and Freemasons in Europe, 1723-1939, trans. L. Oschry (Harvard University Press, 1970), 26-53; Arthur Mandel, The Militant Messiah (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1979), 94-95; Denyse Dalbian, Le Comte de Cagliostro (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1983), 162.

132. Scholem, Du frankisme, 27, 37. The "Strict Observance" had developed out of Jacobite Masonic rites, and many members still considered the Young Pretender to be their Grand Master.

133. Gordon P. Hills, "Notes on Some Contemporary References to Dr. Falk, the Baal-Shem of London, in the Rainsford Papers in the British Museum," Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England, Sessions 1915-1917 (London: 1918), 125.

134. A Speech of Lord George Gordon's, Containing a Spirited Defense of the Antient Constitution of the Church and State of Scotland (n.p., n.d.). This rare, 8-page pamphlet is in the National Library of Scotland.

135. Arthur Williamson, "British Israel and Roman Britain: The Jews and Scottish Models of Polity from George Buchanan to Samuel Rutherford," in Jewish Christians and Christian Jews, eds. Richard Popkin and Gordon Weiner (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 1994), 111.

136. Gordon, Speech, 8.

137. Hubert La Marle, Phillipe Égalité: "Grand Maître" de la Revolution (Paris: Nouvelles Editions Latines, 1989), 52.

138. Colson, Gordon, 184.

139. "Memoirs of Count Caglisotro," European Magazine, 9 (May 1787), 328.

140. Watson, Gordon, 36.

141. Dalbian, Cagliostro, 95.

142. G. Bain, Thunderbolt, 4.

143. Lord George Gordon, Innocence Vindicated, 2nd.ed. (London: R. Denham, 1783), II, 18.

144. Copy of a Letter from the Right Honourable Lord George Gordon to Elias Lindo, Esq., and the Portuguese, and Nathan Salomon, Esq., and the German Jews (London, 1783).

145. John Shaftesley, "Jews in English Regular Freemasonry, 1717-1860," Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England, 25 (1977), 183.

146. Cecil Roth, Anglo-Jewish Letters, 1158-1917 (London: Soncino, 1938), 185.

147. Watson, Gordon, 75.

148. Solomons, "Gordon's Conversion," 229.

149. Hibbert, King Mob, 157.

150. Lindsay, Holyrood, 193-94; Gould, History, III, 196-99.

151. Grand Lodge, London: Atholl Register F, vol. VI, f.383.

152. Rambler's Magazine (September 1785), 342-43.

- 
153. See articles on "Lord George Gordon" and "William Blake," Encyclopedia Judaica.
  154. A.E. Hubert, The Phoenix Lodge, #173 (1785-1909) (London: private circulation, 1910), 1.
  155. Britsch, Jeunesse de Orleans, 414; Dalbian, Cagliostro, 134.
  156. Colson, Gordon, 142-43.
  157. Alexander Lawrie, The History of Freemasonry (Edinburgh, 1804), 235.
  158. Howell's argument was included in R. Burton [Nathaniel Crouch], Memorable Remarks Upon the Ancient and Modern State of the Jewish Nation (Bolton: B. Jackson, 1786), 48, 125-63.
  159. La Marle, Philippe Égalité, 20, 40, 95, 111, 508.
  160. Solomons, "Gordon's Conversion," 231.
  161. Sophie von la Roche, Sophie in London, 1786, being the Diary of Sophie von la Roche, trans. Claire Williams (London: Jonathon Cape, 1933), 139. For the overtures of Cagliostro and Gordon to Blake's artistic and Swedenborgian colleagues, see my "William Blake and the Promiscuous Baboons: A Cagliostroan Séance Gone Awry," British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies, 18 (1995), 187-200.
  162. Louis Petit de Bachaumont, Mémoires Secrets (Londres: John Adamson, 1788-89, II, 253-54).
  163. Harry Schnur, Mystic Rebels (New York: Beechhurst, 1949), 282.
  164. Monod, Jacobitism, 41-42.
  165. [Theveneau de Morande], Ma Correspondance avec M. le Comte de Cagliostro (à Hamburg [London], aux dépens de la société des Cagliostriens, 1786), 12-15, 21, 25, 62.
  166. La Roche, Sophie, 138-39, 148-49, 160.
  167. Watson, Gordon, 75.
  168. Rylands, Records, II, 29; J.P. Dawson, "The Chevalier Bartholomew Ruspini, 1728-1813," Ars Quatuor Coronatorum, 86 (1973), 87-99.
  169. Charles Porset, Les Philalèthes et les Convents de Paris: Une politique de la folie (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1996), 213, 488.
  170. Rylands, Record, II, 31-32; General Advertiser (2 December 1786).
  171. [Nicholas de Bonneville], La Maçonnerie Ecossoise comparée avec les Trois Professions et le Secret des Templiers du 14e siècle (Orient de Londres [Berlin], 1788), I, 28-29; II, 84-86.
  172. Charlotta von der Recke, Nachricht von des Berichtigten Cagliostro in Mitau (Berlin and Stettin: Friedrich Nicolai, 1787), 6; Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Italian Journey (1786-1788), trans. W.H. Auden and E. Mayer (London, 1962), 245.
  173. James Gillray, The Works of James Gillray (London: Benjamin Blom, 1968), plate 37.
  174. Bonneville, Maçonnerie Ecossoise, passim.
  175. [Lord George Gordon], The Prisoners' Petition to the right Honourable Lord George Gordon, to Preserve the Lives and Liberties and Prevent their Banishment to Botany Bay (London, 1786); Hibbert, King Mob, 161.
  176. Levander, "Jerusalem Sols," 47.
  177. Watson, Gordon, 119. My italics.
  178. Grand Lodge Library, London: Grand Master's Lodge Record, 13, 17, 23-24, 83.
  179. Alfred Cobban, Ambassadors and Secret Agents (London: Jonathon Cape, 1954), 107.
  180. [Archenholz, ed.], British Mercury, II (July 1787), 37, 41.
  181. British Mercury, II (13 August 1787), 206.
  182. "Sir Jeffry Dunstan's Address to His Constituents," Wonderful Magazine (1793), I, 334.

- 
183. Thomas Fenn, Prince of Wales's Lodge, #259: List of Members from the Time of Its Constitution (London: private printing, 1890), 5.
184. For the radical Masonic associations of the Prince of Wales, his uncles and brothers, see my article, "Blake's Tiriel and the Regency Crisis: Lifting the Veil on a Royal Masonic Scandal," in Blake, Politics, and History, eds. Anthony Rosso and Jackie Di Salvo (New York: Garland Press, 1998).
185. On these secret Jewish loans, see Robert Huish, Memoirs of George IV (London: Thomas Kelley, 1831), II, 136-42, 168.
186. Robert Huish, The History of the Life and Reign of William IV (London: W. Emans, 1837), IV, 221.
187. La Marle, Phillipe Égalité, 97-98.
188. Monod, Jacobitism, 305; see René Le Forestier, La Franc-Maçonnerie Templière et Occultiste au XVIIIe et XIXe Siècles, ed. **Antoine Faivre** (Paris: Louvain, 1970), 853.
189. Huish, George IV, II, 136-42; Paul Emden, "The Brothers Goldsmid and the Financing of the Napoleonic Wars," Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England, 14 (1935-39), 225-46.
190. Lang, "Wild Career," 331; Bain, Thunderbolt, 29-37.
191. Watson, Gordon, 90.
192. William Blake, Jerusalem: The Emanation of the Giant Albion, ed. Morton Paley (Princeton: William Blake Trust, 1991), plates I and 27.